

**The Application of Strategic Human  
Resource Management in Improving  
Attraction and Retention of Teachers**

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I declare that this thesis is my account of my research and contains as its main content work, which has not previously been submitted, for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
LIST OF APPENDICES .....	ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	x
ABSTRACT .....	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background to the Research .....	2
1.1.1 Critical Role of Teachers and Teacher Shortage .....	3
1.1.2 Understanding the Teacher Shortage Problem in Western Australia .....	6
1.1.3 Attraction and Retention Strategies Currently in Place .....	11
1.1.4 The Role of Strategic HRM in Attraction and Retention .....	17
1.2 Research Problem and Research Questions .....	19
1.3 Purpose and Significance of Research .....	20
1.4 Overview of Applied Methodology .....	22
1.5 Structure of the Thesis .....	24
1.6 Conclusion .....	25
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	26
2.1 Introduction .....	26
2.2 Realising School Goals – Teachers as Key Stakeholders .....	27
2.2.1 School Systems, Structures and Governance .....	28
2.2.2 Teachers as Key Stakeholders .....	33
2.2.3 Strategic Human Resource Management and Teacher Shortage .....	34
2.2.3.1 What Attracts People to Teaching .....	35
2.2.3.2 Why Teachers Leave .....	37
2.3 Strategic HRM Evolution - Background and Theoretical Perspectives .....	45
2.3.1 Beliefs and Assumptions of HRM .....	50
2.3.2 Strategy of HRM .....	50
2.3.3 The roles of Line Managers in HRM .....	52
2.3.4 Levers of HRM implementation .....	53
2.4 Strategic Human Resource Management in Practice .....	57
2.4.1 Elements of Strategic Human Resource Management .....	61
2.4.1.1 Human resource strategies .....	64
2.4.1.2 Human resource planning .....	65
2.4.1.3 Human resource functions .....	67
2.4.2 Universal Approach and Contingency Theory .....	76
2.5 Adopting Strategic Human Resource Management in Schools .....	78
2.5.1 Strategic Human Resource Management in the Public Sector .....	79
2.5.2 School Model of Strategic Human Resource Management .....	84
2.5.3 Strategic Human Resource Management Strategies to Build a Steady Teacher Workforce .....	87
2.6 Conceptual Schema and Research Questions .....	96
2.7 Conclusion .....	98
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY .....	100
3.1 Introduction .....	100
3.2 Justification for the Methodology .....	101
3.2.1 Constructivist Paradigm .....	103

3.2.2	Ontology .....	104
3.2.3	Epistemology .....	104
3.2.4	Methodology .....	105
3.3	Research Strategy Design .....	107
3.3.1	Delphi Study Phase .....	109
3.3.1.1	Delphi Procedure.....	111
3.3.1.2	Delphi Participants.....	114
3.3.2	Case Study Phase .....	116
3.3.2.1	Procedures and Methods for Case Study A.....	118
3.3.2.2	Procedures and Methods for Case Study B .....	124
3.3.3	Electronic Data Collection Methods .....	130
3.4	Ethical Considerations .....	131
3.4.1	Validity and Reliability .....	132
3.5	Conclusion.....	135
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS.....		136
4.1	Introduction .....	136
4.2	Delphi Study Findings .....	137
4.2.1	Teacher Shortage Problems in WA.....	139
4.2.1.1	Round 1 .....	139
4.2.1.2	Round 2 .....	140
4.2.1.3	Round 3 .....	141
4.2.2	SHRM Implementation in WA's School Sector.....	143
4.2.2.1	Round 1 .....	143
4.2.2.2	Round 2 .....	145
4.2.2.3	Round 3 .....	146
4.2.3	Current HR Practices for Teacher Attraction/Retention .....	148
4.2.3.1	Round 1 .....	148
4.2.3.2	Round 2 .....	153
4.2.3.3	Round 3 .....	153
4.2.4	SHRM strategies to Improve Teacher Attraction / Retention .....	154
4.2.4.1	Round 1 .....	154
4.2.4.2	Round 2 .....	155
4.2.4.3	Round 3 .....	157
4.2.5	Summary of Delphi Study Findings.....	158
4.3	Case Study A Findings: Status of SHRM Implementation.....	159
4.3.1	Case Demographics.....	161
4.3.2	Status of SHRM Implementation: Detailed Case by Case Description .....	162
4.3.2.1	CASE CS1 .....	162
4.3.2.2	CASE CS2 .....	164
4.3.2.3	CASE CS3 .....	168
4.3.2.4	CASE CS4 .....	170
4.3.2.5	CASE CS5 .....	173
4.3.2.6	CASE CS6 .....	176
4.3.2.7	CASE CS7 .....	180
4.3.2.8	CASE CS8 .....	184
4.3.2.9	CASE CS9 .....	186
4.3.2.10	CASE CS10 .....	189
4.3.3	Status of SHRM Implementation: Cross-Case Analysis .....	195
4.3.4	Summary of Case Study A Findings.....	199
4.4	Case Study B Findings: Strategies for Teacher Attraction and Retention.....	200

4.4.1	Findings from Ten Multi-Site In-depth Interviews .....	200
4.4.1.1	Teacher attraction and retention problems .....	201
4.4.1.2	Current HR practices to attract and retain teachers.....	202
4.4.1.3	Importance of teachers for competitive advantage .....	204
4.4.1.4	Implication of SHRM approach to teacher attraction / retention.....	204
4.4.1.5	Strategies for general teacher attraction / retention .....	205
4.4.1.6	Strategies for early career teachers: .....	207
4.4.2	Findings from Retired Teachers In-depth Interviews .....	208
4.4.2.1	Why people are attracted to teaching? .....	209
4.4.2.2	Why teachers leave the profession? .....	210
4.4.2.3	Ranking of attraction and retention influencing factors.....	212
4.4.2.4	Strategies for improving teacher attraction / retention.....	213
4.4.3	Findings from the Teacher Survey .....	218
4.4.3.1	Demographics of participating teachers .....	218
4.4.3.2	Why the participants were attracted to teaching .....	219
4.4.3.3	Strategies for improving attraction and retention .....	221
4.4.3.4	Participant's future career direction and preferences .....	223
4.4.3.5	Additional strategies for improving attraction/retention.....	226
4.4.4	Summary of Case Study B Findings .....	229
4.5	Conclusion.....	231
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS .....		234
5.1	Introduction .....	234
5.2	Implementation of Strategic HRM in Schools .....	235
5.2.1	Strategic Planning Process.....	235
5.2.2	Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives .....	237
5.2.3	Dedicated HR Department.....	238
5.2.4	Vertical and Horizontal Alignment.....	239
5.2.5	Overall Level of SHRM Implementation in Schools .....	240
5.3	Teacher Attraction and retention .....	243
5.3.1	Appraisal and Performance Management Strategies .....	250
5.3.2	Professional Development Strategies for Teachers.....	250
5.3.3	Recruitment and Selection Strategies.....	251
5.3.4	Reward System Strategies .....	252
5.4	Limitations .....	253
5.5	Contributions to Current and Future Work.....	256
5.5.1	Contributions to Current Theory and Practice .....	257
5.5.2	Implications for Future Research .....	259
5.6	General Summary .....	260
LIST OF REFERENCES .....		266
APPENDICES .....		289

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Delphi Study Participants and Study Criteria Expectations .....	114
Table 3.2: Delphi Study Participants Listing .....	115
Table 3.3: Case Study A Participants and Interview Dates.....	123
Table 3.4: Retired Teachers Interview Participants and Response Dates.....	127
Table 3.5: Teacher Survey Respondent Spread.....	129
Table 4.1: Question 1 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores.....	140
Table 4.2. Variation in Attraction and Retention Problems by School Sector.....	142
Table 4.3: Question 2 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores .....	144
Table 4.4: Question 3 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores .....	152
Table 4.5: Ranking of Attraction/Retention Influencing Factors .....	154
Table 4.6: Question 4 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores.....	155
Table 4.7: List of Suggested Strategies to Improve Attraction/Retention .....	156
Table 4.8: Evidence of Strategic Planning Process .....	195
Table 4.9: Evidence of Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives .....	196
Table 4.10: Evidence of Dedicated HR Department .....	197
Table 4.11: Evidence of Vertical and Horizontal Alignment.....	198
Table 4.12: Composite Evidence of All SHRM Requirements.....	198
Table 4.13: Summary of Status of SHRM Implementation .....	199
Table 4.14: Extent of Teacher Shortage Problem.....	202
Table 4.15: Strategies to Improve General Attraction / Retention .....	205
Table 4.16: Strategies to Improve Attraction / Retention of Early Career Teachers....	207
Table 4.17: Ranking Results .....	212
Table 4.18: Reasons Participants were Attracted to Teaching .....	219
Table 4.19: Reasons 20 – 30 Year old Participants were Attracted to Teaching .....	221

Table 4.20: Strategies for Improving Retention .....	222
Table 4.21: Strategies for Early Career Teachers .....	222
Table 4.22: Percentage of Participants' Location Preferences .....	223
Table 4.23: Remote Location Choices by Years Worked.....	224
Table 4.24: Future Career Intentions by Years Worked .....	224
Table 4.25: Reasons for Attraction and Future Career Intentions .....	225

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Map of Australia showing Western Australia .....	6
Figure 2.1: A Strategic Model of Human Resource Management .....	62
Figure 2.2: WA Public Sector SHRM Framework.....	81
Figure 2.3: Proposed School Model of Strategic Human Resource Management .....	85
Figure 2.4: Conceptual Schema Drawn from the Literature .....	97
Figure 3.1: Research Strategy Design.....	108
Figure 3.2: Delphi Procedure Flowchart.....	112



## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

Appendix 3.1:	Delphi Study Cover letter and Round 1 Questions
Appendix 3.2:	Delphi Study Round 2 Questions
Appendix 3.3:	Delphi Study Round 3 Questions
Appendix 3.4:	Case Study A and Case study B Questions
Appendix 3.5:	Retired Teachers Electronic Interview Questions
Appendix 3.6:	Teachers Survey Questions
Appendix 3.7:	Examples of Consent Agreement Letters
Appendix 4.1:	Case Study Participants and Site Demographics
Appendix 4.2:	Retired Teachers Demographics
Appendix 4.3:	Teachers Survey Participants' Demographics

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## **ABSTRACT**

Many industries have successfully linked human resource functions and strategic management processes to provide competitive advantage, improved performance and quality of work life (Lansbury 2003; Cascio 2006). This thesis investigates the uptake of Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) and whether SHRM practices can improve the attraction and retention of teachers within the school sector in Western Australia (WA). The State, like other areas worldwide, has an ageing teacher workforce and faces the threat of longer-term teacher shortages (Department of Education, Science and Training 2003) and implementing SHRM might be one way of addressing these shortages. Aligning a strategic planning process, a clear mission, strategic objectives and a dedicated Human Resources (HR) department to vertically and horizontally integrate HR functions (Tompkins, 2002) as suggested by the SHRM model, should improve teacher attraction and retention outcomes.

This multi-method qualitative research used an exploratory Delphi study and two case studies. The Delphi study drew on eight participants from school agencies and academia. One case study involved principals or HR staff from the private and public school sectors; the other case study included serving and retired teachers.

Currently SHRM uptake is variable, with the strongest evidence from the larger private schools and the public sector centrally, though this was poorly devolved at the school level. The smaller private schools had the weakest evidence of SHRM uptake. Respondents agreed that SHRM could improve teacher attraction / retention by enhancing working conditions, such as appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward. SHRM could also

foster important influences on teacher attraction and retention, such as personal characteristics and a supportive culture and in addition, respondents recommended implementation of further specific SHRM strategies.

The study generalisability may be limited by the unique characteristics of WA or there could be some respondent bias. Nonetheless, this study is one of the first to investigate the level of implementation and role of SHRM in improving attraction and retention of teachers. A model of SHRM in education would not only benefit WA schools, but also could broadly apply to or add insights for other education systems.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

The attraction and retention of teachers is a problem for schools worldwide. This includes Western Australia (WA), where problems of attraction and retention are manifested in difficulties recruiting teachers in some subject areas and in the rural or remote locations, a gender imbalance, and an ageing teacher workforce (DEST 2003; MCEETYA 2004; DETWA 2007; Stokes 2007). This problem was accelerated by general shortages and the growth of alternative high paying jobs in the private sector, during the pre – 2008/9 period of economic boom in the state.

In 2007, public schools had a shortfall of 264 teachers (compared with 32 in 2006). Only a third of the 1500 who applied for new teaching posts took up the positions they were offered (Hiatt 2007a). Although the vacancy level had dropped to eight (8) teachers in 2009 (Lampathakis 2009) partly due to the impact of the 2008/9 global economic downturn and the new pay deal for WA teachers, this is considered a short term relief as teacher shortage is projected to increase to more than 2000 by the year 2015 (Perpitch 2009).

Implementing a strategic approach to human resource management in schools might go some way towards enhancing the attraction and retention of teachers. Many other industries have found that strategically aligned human resource functions benefit organisations and employees alike by improving commitment, work satisfaction and performance (Kramar 1999; Lansbury 2003; Cascio 2006). Calls for a more strategic approach to management in schools suggest this could also improve the effectiveness of personnel management initiatives (Smylie, Miretzky and Konkol 2004). Therefore, this thesis reports on research investigating the utilisation of strategic human resource

management (SHRM) practices within the school sector in Western Australia.

This first of five chapters introduces research into how the SHRM approach can be deployed in schools. The chapter discusses the issues surrounding teacher shortages as background to the research, followed by highlights of existing literature on the emergence of SHRM and its influence on teacher attraction and retention. The chapter presents the research questions, outlines the research purpose and presents an overview of the research methodology applied. Finally, the chapter concludes after describing the five-chapter structure of the thesis. Given that the research involves a specific application to Western Australia, the background section will include a brief review of relevant information on the State of Western Australia.

## **1.1 Background to the Research**

The goals of education, as highlighted in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights Article 26, stress that everyone has the right to education because of the need for human justice and social equity (UN 1948). According to Nicolaou (2008), education is important in building human capital and the level of labour productivity improves by about 8% due to a one-year increase in the average educational attainment of the workforce. Schools depend on an available skilled and professional teaching workforce to help them achieve such educational outcomes. Therefore, a critical success factor for schools lies in their ability to attract, recruit and retain high quality teachers. The reality is that schools in Western Australia, as well as globally, are challenged with teacher shortages, which can potentially affect the achievement of desired learning outcomes in the longer term.

Australia has introduced national goals for schooling in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, predicted on the expectation that the future of Australia depends upon everyone acquiring the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values required to make for a productive and rewarding life. The 2005 estimate of the number of students in the school levels by the Australian Bureau of Statistics was approximately 1.9 million [primary], 1.4 million [secondary] and 0.9 million [higher education] (ABS 2005). Educated Australians are needed to contribute to the country's social, cultural and economic development in a local and wider global context (SCRGSP 2006). Schools provide the stepping stone through which these educational goals and purposes are formally realised (Davies, Gregory and McGuinn 2002).

### **1.1.1 Critical Role of Teachers and Teacher Shortage**

Whilst contributions from all stakeholders are needed for the school to realise its outcomes and objectives, a critical contributor is the teacher. Other stakeholders within the school system consist of administrators, students, ancillary staff and the parents, but the degree of success in achieving education goals depends largely on the roles of teachers as key stakeholders (Foster 1987). However, schools have to grapple with a number of challenges ranging from teacher shortages, teacher losses under the strain of low salaries, unfavourable conditions of service and changing community values and expectations (Santiago 2001). Clearly, these school problems affect the ability to meet school objectives.

Given a teachers' role in educating the young, shortages will affect the ability of schools to successfully achieve quality educational outcomes; therefore, it is important for schools to not only attract quality teachers, they also need to retain them (DEST

2003; DETWA 2004b). This is because of the segmentation of the teacher labour market by subject area whereby the loss of supply in one area leads to productivity loss, for instance, a Mathematics teacher cannot replace an English teacher (Webster, Wooden and Marks 2006). Teacher shortages are a worldwide phenomenon that manifest in many different ways. The issues range from the number of teachers to the quality of the teachers and the increased movement of teachers in and out of the profession. Some teachers take career breaks and later return to teaching, however, more teachers leaving the profession than returning, exacerbate teacher shortages and this instability is a concern (Ross and Hutchings 2003).

Teacher shortage exists when employers cannot, at the current wage levels, fill the desired number of positions from the start of the school year with appropriately qualified staff (Webster, Wooden and Marks 2004). Shortage could be measured by the vacancies which exist in a school, positions that have been advertised, or more correctly by a deficit in the supply of qualified candidates for the vacant job position (DfES 2000; White, Gorard and See 2006). The demand for teachers in any school can be determined through a number of indicators, e.g. vacancies and pupil ratios (White et al. 2006) and the number of teachers leaving through death, retirement, or dismissal (Webb and Norton 2003).

Shortage exists when the demand for teachers exceeds supply. Teacher supply sources include; first time teachers, transfers from other schools, districts or states, those re-entering the profession after a career break or returning retirees. When retirees come in to work - their experience is an additional benefit (Webb and Norton 2003). The



teacher labour market is not segmented by school sectors, as a qualified teacher can work in any school, therefore making inter-school movements possible (Webster et al. 2006). Teacher shortage is a problem in many countries such as in Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom [UK] and the United States of America [USA] (EDWA 1999). For instance, communities across the USA struggle to fill teaching vacancies and the imbalance between the number entering and staying in the teaching profession and the number needed in the classroom is also steadily growing (NEA 2003). The teacher shortage crisis in America dates back to the 1990's where teacher retirements, growing enrolments, reduced class size, tougher certification/testing standards for new teachers created an urgent need for more teachers (Pipho 1998).

Since teacher shortage is a problem, it is important to identify the factors influencing teacher attraction and retention. The reasons people are motivated to either take up teaching as a profession or leave are many and complex. Line managers and personnel professionals should understand employees' motivational reasons before necessary changes can be advocated (Analoui 2007). The decision to take up teaching or stay in the profession could be for intrinsic and/or extrinsic factors. The literature suggests that non-monetary personal preferences, the joy of and desire to work with children and intellectual fulfillment are some of the reasons people are attracted to teaching; whereas job satisfaction manifested in realistic work-loads, manageable class sizes and flexibility in the compensation structure facilitate retention (Preston 2000; Hunt 2002; Skilbeck and Connell 2003; Webster et al. 2004).

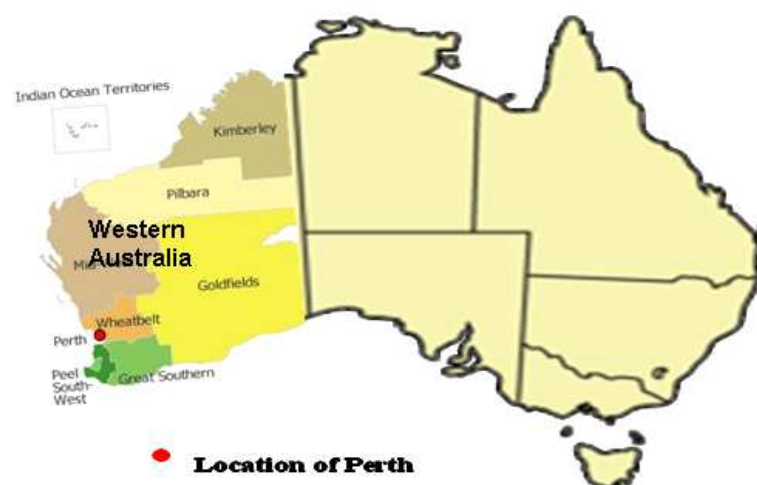
Several factors contribute to the basic causes of why teachers leave the profession. For example, Marshall and Marshall (2003) in a study examining the high

attrition rate of teachers in selected public schools in America cited a combination of monetary, personal, organisational and teaching preparation factors as causes of the high attrition of teachers. Other factors that contribute to teachers leaving the profession include individual school characteristics, such as school size, geographical location, the sector type and the organisational conditions under which teachers work (Ingersoll 2001b; Skilbeck and Connell 2003). Teacher shortage is not only a problem overseas; it is an issue here in Australia as described in the following sub-section.

### **1.1.2 Understanding the Teacher Shortage Problem in Western Australia**

Before discussing the Teacher shortage problems in Australia and Western Australia, it is important to understand some of the specific difficulties WA faces. Western Australia is Australia's largest state and was founded in 1829 by Captain James Stirling. The majority of the Western Australian population is located in Perth (the capital city - see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Map of Australia showing Western Australia



Perth is the capital city of Western Australia (WA) and has a population of approximately 1.5 million, in a State of about 2.1 million people (GWA 2009a). In WA's 2.645 million square kilometers (GWA 2009b), Perth occupies 6,100 square kilometers making it the State's largest city and fourth most populous urban capital city in Australia (Wikipedia 2009). A problem for the education system is the population distribution. Most of the population is either in Perth or in large rural centres (most of which are on the coast). In general, as distance from Perth and the coast increases, the population diminishes. The most populous country region is the south-west and the least populous is the large northern inland region. For education purposes, the regions are divided into rural and remote areas, consisting of the South West; Lower Great Southern, Upper Great Southern, Midlands, South Eastern, Central, Pilbara and Kimberly districts (DETTWA 2005).

Western Australia is a resource - rich State in Australia and endowed with natural resources such as gold, iron ore, nickel, manganese, alumina, diamonds, mineral sands, coal, oil and natural gas (GSA 2002). To sustain a viable growth rate, the State needs to attract successful investors and skilled labour from overseas and most of the world's major resource and engineering companies have offices in Perth (GWA 2009a). A buoyant economy has, until the economic downturn of 2008/9, seen a growing skill shortage in a number of areas, particularly in mining and construction, where jobs were both readily available and well paid (ABS 2009). There has also been an influx of people migrating to WA from other Australian States under the 'Go West Now Interstate Skills Attraction Campaign' (GWC) introduced in 2006 by the State government to address the labour shortage (DIAC 2008) and from overseas countries thus creating a diverse population in the State (GWA 2009a).

Understanding the current shortage issues and the extent of a looming future shortage in terms of numbers of teachers in Australia and WA is important for the education systems if they are to come up with strategies to help attract, recruit and retain teachers. Projections in 2001 indicated that a high demand for teachers would continue through the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Kanman 2001). A national review of Teaching and Teacher Education conducted in October 2003 by a committee for the review of teaching and teacher education found that Australia has a comprehensive educational system and the supply of teachers was adequate to meet school needs across the country in the short term. Concerns identified were recruitment difficulties for some secondary specialisations such as physics, chemistry, mathematics, technology and languages other than English Studies (DEST 2003).

In addition, the teacher population is ageing; in the fifteen years to 2001 the median age of the teaching population rose from 34 to 43 years, however this figure has not changed as the median age still remains at 43 years (Templeton 2009). In 2004, throughout Australia, it was also identified that 44 percent of teachers were over 45 years,. Non-government sector had a quarter of primary school teachers aged over 50 years, 17 percent were aged 45-49 years, 27 percent of secondary school teachers were aged over 50 years and additional 15 percent of secondary teachers were aged 45-49 years (MCEETYA 2004; Stokes 2007). However as Stokes (2007) predicts, the current entry rate of new teachers particularly at the secondary school level will not equal the retirement rate in the years ahead. Also, the gender bias towards females is pronounced in the teaching profession (MCEETYA 1999; DEST 2003).

Western Australia has seen changes to its teachers supply in the last decade; from a position of shortage in the early 1990's to a state of broad imbalance. Attraction and retention of quality teachers is a problem in the public school system for schools in rural and remote parts of the State and some outer metropolitan locations, as compared to their metropolitan counterparts. Although it should be noted however, that some of these metropolitan schools experience difficulties with 'hard to staff' schools. Similar to the wider Australian problems, WA suffers from a lack of secondary teachers in certain subject areas, such as in the sciences (especially the Physical Sciences), Mathematics, Technology (including Information Communication Technology) and Languages other than English [LOTE] (MCEETYA 1999; Johnson, Birkeland, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu and Peske 2001; DETWA 2004d).

The ageing of the teacher population is worsening, with WA topping the list of the States and territories. The study carried out by Gerald Daniels in 2007 on behalf of the WA Department of Education and Training (DET) estimated that over 30% of the department's teaching workforce of about 20,000 was over the 50 years age bracket with a significant number of aged teachers from the science, mathematics and technology and enterprise areas (DETWA 2007). Nonetheless, teacher shortages are an issue for both the public and private schools in WA. Also, given there has been an increase in the demand for independent schools, demand for teachers in the future in this sector will expectedly be on the increase (MCEETYA 1999; ISP 2003). Although the WA DET is the largest single employer in the state public and education sector (Castetter and Young 2000; Rebore 2001), it faces strong competition in the labour market from the Catholic and Independent School Sectors (DETWA 2007) as well as the broader labour market.

Furthermore, the inflexibility in the payment system has created shortages of qualified teachers in specialised teacher labour markets and poor incentives for excellent teachers to remain in teaching (Webster et al. 2004). During 2007/8, it appeared that the teacher shortage problem in WA had accelerated compared to previous years. For instance, in January 2007, the then WA Education Minister, Mr. Mark McGowan, acknowledged before the start of the school year that there was a shortfall of 264 teachers and nearly two-thirds of these vacancies were in rural schools. The Pilbara, in the central north of the state, was the worst affected, but the department also struggled to fill positions in city schools. This led to the State Government transferring teachers from desk jobs to classrooms as a temporary measure to solve the 2007 staff shortages (Hiatt 2007c).

The situation was aggravated by the fact that only a third of the 1500 people who applied for teaching posts in 2007 agreed to take jobs when they were offered. Mr. McGowan placed some blame for this on the then booming WA economy as it provided alternative attractive jobs in the private sector (Hiatt 2007b). Further concerns were raised in a study of over 1700 teachers across Australia conducted by the Australian Education Union (AEU) in 2007, which cited behaviour management problems, heavy workloads, class sizes and poor pay as teachers' top concerns (AEU 2008; Hiatt 2008a). The study found that amongst those who had been in the profession between one to three years in WA, 20 percent (more than the national average of 15 percent) did not intend to remain in the profession in the next five years, whilst 64 percent (compared to the national average of 55.5 percent) planned to quit within ten years (Hiatt 2008a).

About 2000 teachers retire each year in Western Australian and as a strategy to reduce the workforce crisis, the then Labour government, under Mr. Alan Carpenter, initiated a move to encourage approximately 1000 retired teachers back to the teaching workforce; however, only two showed interest in this offer as the offer was not attractive enough (DETTWA 2007). The ‘sweetened’ deal for hard-to-staff schools included a substantial pay offer of 90,000 Australian dollars, flexible work arrangements, regional and remote bonuses and superannuation incentives. The consequences of failing to lure this set of teachers back, led to bigger class sizes, increased workload and non-qualified teachers teaching in the classrooms (Campbell 2008).

Recognising the role teacher’s play in helping achieve educational outcomes means that vacancies or not having an available subject teacher, invariably means students are deprived of being offered a particular subject. Hence it is important to resolve these teacher shortage problems (Maclean 1999) and most countries, including Australia, have been taking steps to address the issue (Bishop 1989). Western Australia has initiated a number of projects and studies to understand the issues and recommend strategies and or policy extensions to help find solutions to the teacher shortage issues. Some of the strategies being adopted worldwide are described in the next section.

### **1.1.3 Attraction and Retention Strategies Currently in Place**

The attraction and retention of teachers are viewed as critical and several strategies have already been deployed to improve the situation. Former Prime Minister, John Howard initiated a three-billion-dollar long-term strategy titled, ‘Backing Australia’s Ability’, to

attract more people into the teaching profession, particularly in science, technology and mathematics (DEST 2002). Another initiative was the 'Springboard into Teaching' program developed by the University of New South Wales in partnership with the states school system and aimed at attracting and retaining students most likely to develop into good teachers (Ramsey 2000). A survey amongst the students participating in this program revealed that they were enthusiastic about accepting teaching as their profession in the future (Graham, Phelps, Kerr and Macmaster 2004).

Financial incentive schemes represent another strategy that is being trialed. For instance, in the USA, teachers in specific scarce subject areas and more experienced teachers attract a higher reward (Webster et al. 2004). Another strategy is providing financial incentives to assist with moving teachers from the metropolitan to the rural or remote areas. A successful example of this scheme is the Queensland Remote Area Incentive Scheme, which has had a positive impact on the movement of teachers from metropolitan to rural schools. Although these monetary incentives produce some winning positives, there is need to be aware of the potential negative impact of over-emphasising monetary gains and values (Skilbeck and Connell 2003).

Other incentives include a WA scheme to assist with the payment of university fees for science graduates entering the teaching profession and reviewing the probation procedures for transitioning from a provisional teacher position to a fully registered teacher status so as to make teaching more attractive to these graduates. To qualify as a teacher requires a minimum of four years in higher education, or a minimum of one year pre-service for those with a four year double degree in other subjects or profession or for those entering into teaching from other professions. This strategy has been suggested



because of the need for a flexible pathway to give mature age students an opportunity to come into the teaching profession with their knowledge acquired from other careers and their lifelong experiences (DEST 2003) .

In addition, various levels of government have policies designed to address recruitment problems at the government school sector and to make teaching more attractive. For instance, the national government strategy 'Backing Australia's Ability' features strategies for attracting talented people to the teaching profession in line with its policy on 'Knowledge and Innovation' to strengthen Australia's innovative capabilities in the longer term. The strategies include providing adequate support for research and development, further promotion of teaching as a career, initiatives to increase the number of teachers in the subject areas of need and attracting teachers to remote and rural areas, as well as involving stakeholders and improving strategic planning in the government sector (MCEETYA/TQELT 2003).

The Victorian government has regulated the profession and this has enhanced teacher status addressing both quantity [teacher supply] and the quality [professional development] through an expansionist policy, funding new teaching posts to improve staff–student ratios, reconstituting the State's Teacher Supply and Demand Reference Group and in establishing an Institute of Teaching to regulate entry (Skilbeck and Connell 2003). Another example of a government initiative, which this time addresses the gender imbalance issue is the 3-year (2002 - 2005) strategy plan of the state Education Department in Queensland. The plan calls on all government schools to strive for a diverse work force to diminish feminisation of the teaching population (EQ 2002; Mills, Martino and Lingard 2004).

For Western Australia, attracting teachers into schools is not a straightforward process. The challenge to attract experienced and motivated teachers in specific subject areas to the rural and remote areas remains, because of the vastness of the state and isolated distribution of the remote areas (RREAC 2000; Sharplin 2002). In an attempt to get teachers into the rural areas in WA, the Education department had set up a Remote Teaching Service initiative to promote teacher relocation to rural areas in which it offers financial and other benefits to teachers in these environments (EDWA 2000).

Another strategy involved placing pre-service teachers in the rural and remote areas. This strategy included awarding scholarships to encourage the young teachers take up internships and practicum programs in these locations (Boylan and Hemmings 1993; Jackiewicz, Lincoln and Brockman 1998). However this scheme has not been very successful in WA as it is not cost effective due to the large size of the State (Sharplin 2002). This is not surprising, as staffing and retaining teachers in the rural and remote schools is difficult globally, as well as in Australia (Davis 1995; Fishbaugh and Berkeley 1995; Richmond 1995; Ballou and Podgursky 1998; McEwan 1999). The size of the State occupies the western third of the Australian continent and for an administrative purpose of the urban and regional areas, there are established 142 local government authorities, 9 development commissions and state and Australian government departments (ABS 2008).

Other recommended strategies include the adoption of interstate recruitment plans for difficult-to-staff schools/positions, and the opportunity to create employment opportunities for less qualified teachers. Employing less qualified teachers could entail

modifying the qualification requirements (Preston 2000). Using less qualified teachers could help solve shortages in the short term, but could arguably lead to reduced student performance, less job satisfaction, higher teacher attrition, increased public discontent and further erosion of education standards in the long term (Fetler 1997a). However, the greater use of teacher aids and other support personnel could reduce the burden on these teachers.

Employers have put forward a number of family-friendly policies which include child care, elder care, flexible work schedules, job sharing, telecommuting and extended parental leave (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright 2007) to improve commitment and hence attraction and retention. Strategies in WA include targeting graduates trained in areas where future shortages appear likely, retaining male teachers, enhancing teaching as a profession, additional country incentives for teaching in rural and remote areas and a level 3 classroom teacher career structure (EDWA 1999; DETWA 2002; DETWA 2003-2004c). The Level 3 Classroom Teacher position was introduced in 1997 to create a career path for lead teachers capable of mentoring other teachers (Kleinheinz, Ingvarson and Chadbourne 2000), with the purpose of helping retain exemplary and experienced teaching staff and supporting the retention of younger teachers (Noe et al. 2007).

From the foregoing, it is apparent that government and school management bodies are implementing different strategies to combat teacher shortages. However, the ongoing global teacher shortage shows the current strategies in place have had a limited effect thus as Ingersoll (2001b) suggests, winning the fight requires the need to assess

and address the underlying organisational causes. Hence, the recurrence of teacher shortages and the ageing of the workforce, suggests there is room for improvements in the current practices and a need for a system-wide strategic approach (DEST 2003). According to Johnson and Colleagues (2001) there is no simple answer to this problem as clever incentives may attract new teachers, but keeping them will only improve if the culture and working conditions of schools change. An Issues paper on teacher demand and supply 1999 – 2005 prepared by the department of education states: *“an increase in the number of teachers entering the profession in Western Australia will not address teacher demand and supply unless the main issues of mobility, state-wide availability and subject specialisation are addressed”* (Bernardin 2007:5).

It is important that all stakeholders; government, school systems and the individual schools develop and implement effective ways to attract people into the teaching profession and ensure they are retained (CAF 2007). Human resource functions will also be required to improve the ability to attract, develop, retain and motivate people in the schools (Castetter and Young 2000; Rebore 2001). This would place new emphasis on the human resource management functions (Webb and Norton 2003) in the school environment. Smylie and colleagues (2004) argue that to be effective in the school sector, human resources management should be strategic to promote school and system level goals, and systematic in terms of planning and coordination of the different elements. This is an opportunity where the strategic human resource management approach can prove useful.

#### **1.1.4 The Role of Strategic HRM in Attraction and Retention**

Cascio (2006: 686) defines Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) as an *“approach to human resource management that uses people ... most wisely with respect to the strategic needs of the organisation”*. Strategic human resource management links employee management functions and the organisation’s business goals. The practice of SHRM *“can make an important, practical difference in terms of three key organisational outcomes; productivity, quality of work life, and profit”* (Cascio 2006:6) as well as job satisfaction and commitment to the organisation (Armstrong 2000b).

Increased global competition, demand for cost effectiveness and efficiency, and increasing skill shortages mean that people management is a number one priority for organisations to achieve their business objectives (Mello 2006). Effective SHRM provides competitive advantages and improved performance by aligning the human resource functions of recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and management, rewarding and developing employees to the organisation’s goals (Pfeffer 1994; Lundy and Cowling 1996; Armstrong 2000a). Unlike traditional personnel management, where the personnel functions of employee record keeping are performed with little relationship between the various functions or with overall organisational objectives, SHRM assumes that all personnel activities are integrated with each other, and at the same time strategically linked with organisational objectives (Nankervis, Compton and McCarthy 1999).

The main focal areas of SHRM include quality, customer service, productivity, employee involvement, teamwork and workforce flexibility. Fully committed employees work at their best and enjoy job satisfaction (Armstrong 2000a; Scott - Ladd 2001). Theories of SHRM help predict positive outcomes where appropriate human

resource policies drive implementation throughout an organisation. This is propelled by the fact that SHRM helps define the philosophies and values, and sets out how people should be treated. Policies that support mutual goals, influence, respect and responsibility elicit commitment to produce better performance (Legge 1999; Armstrong 2003).

The SHRM approach in Australian private organisations is well documented and recognises the importance of people as an ‘asset’ as well as a ‘cost’ (Lansbury 2003). It is evident that many private organisations, such as companies in manufacturing, IT, and the services sector amongst others have successfully deployed SHRM (Storey 1995; Lundy and Cowling 1996). Although some strategies are in place for addressing both attraction and retention of teachers in WA, the persistence of problems has raised calls for more effective strategies. A strategy that may assist schools attract and retain teachers is to more effectively utilise the SHRM approach, which based on experiences in other industries, has returned lower employee turnover and greater productivity (Smylie et al. 2004).

Implementing a school-based model of SHRM could be a useful strategy to assist schools overcome their teacher shortage challenges. If the implementation of SHRM provides the opportunity to improve teacher attraction and retention, schools and the community would benefit. To be successful in the school sector SHRM programs need to be designed and tailored to the unique characteristics, vision and objectives of schools. This would lead to a model of SHRM that fits the education sector, which would benefit schools within WA and have a broader application to other education systems.

An important role of SHRM in schools would entail having appropriate attraction and retention strategies to reduce teacher shortages (DEST 2003; Ross and Hutchings 2003; Webster et al. 2004) and achieve learning goals by attracting and retaining quality teachers (DEST 2003; DETWA 2004b). A key question, is how effectively SHRM is implemented in WA's education sector? There is evidence that various public sector agencies have adopted some SHRM practices, and although the WA Department of Education and Training has a SHRM policy, it is unclear how effectively it is devolved and practiced at the school level. Therefore, this research examines the extent to which SHRM is practiced in the school sector in WA, and in particular, how attraction and retention of teachers can be improved through the strategic deployment of the HR functions.

## **1.2 Research Problem and Research Questions**

A review of existing literature helped determine the direction and boundaries of the research gaps. This identified the following two unresolved problems:

- Is SHRM really in place in the WA school systems and if so, to what degree?
- Can strategically applied HR functions such as selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance policies/practices deliver improvements in teacher attraction and retention?

These questions streamlined the research questions and led to the following two research questions:

- 1. How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?***

2. *Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

This research attempts to provide answers to the two questions by examining the Western Australian school sector's experiences. The research has no intent to quantify the financial outcomes of School SHRM implementation on retention. Determining the behavioural costs associated with attraction, selection, retention, development and employee behaviours (Cascio 2006) is outside the scope of this study.

The research is also limited to the primary and secondary school sectors. Schooling is mandatory for all Australians between the ages of 6-15 and the estimated number of students in schools across Australia in 2005, was approximately 1.9 million in primary schools and 1.4 million in secondary schools (ABS 2005). This research focuses on primary and secondary schools because of education's critical contribution to the child and community. From this point, the term school(s) is used to imply primary and / or secondary school systems, unless otherwise described.

### **1.3 Purpose and Significance of Research**

The purpose of the research was to investigate the level of implementation of SHRM in schools and identify strategies within a SHRM framework that could be used to improve attraction and retention of teachers. The research involved experts in the field of education and staff from participating Western Australian primary and secondary schools from both the public and private sectors and aims to:



1. Investigate the role of the existing HR policies, strategies and practices operating within schools
2. Evaluate if human resource management is practiced strategically.
3. Identify which existing HR policies, strategies and practices have a major influence on teacher attraction and retention
4. Generate HR strategies and practices that could influence teacher attraction and retention
5. Develop a school-based model of SHRM that incorporates effective selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance strategies that could be widely applied across schools to help attract and retain teachers.

The significance of this research is that it can shed light on how SHRM (and its benefits) can be implemented more effectively within schools. Australia has nearly ten thousand schools and a quarter of a million teachers (DEST 2003) which makes the case for SHRM in schools more compelling. The study will also fill a gap in the literature, as there appears to be little evidence of previous studies examining the role of the strategic human resource management model within the school sector. Knowledge on the subject may also highlight potential areas for further investigation of school-based SHRM. The result of this study has the potential to become a data resource to the WA Department of Education and Training and other regulators on HR practices in schools.

Western Australia has 778 public schools with a student strength of 250,000 and total staff of approximately 28,000. Teacher numbers are 21,000 (equivalent to 75% of total staff numbers) and other staff comprise administrative, clerical, support staff and

cleaners/gardeners (DETTWA 2004d). Clearly, teaching staff comprise the greatest portion of the total staff population; therefore, a problem with teachers represents a problem for schools.

## **1.4 Overview of Applied Methodology**

Section 1.2 listed the two key research questions and this section briefly outlines the methodological approaches employed to answer the research questions. More detailed descriptions and justifications of the methodology are covered in chapter three. Given that qualitative research is well suited to tackling complex social processes, the overall methodology was qualitative. The research was conducted in two phases; a preliminary exploratory phase using a Delphi study and a case study using multiple sites and multiple data gathering procedures. The research followed a constructivist paradigm where the reality of SHRM practice in schools and issues related to teacher attraction and retention were constructed from the perceptions of the respondents.

The use of multiple methods allows for triangulation, which helps produce in-depth understanding of the phenomena being studied (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Furthermore, triangulation using different approaches, methods and techniques in the same study has emerged as a way to overcome the bias and narrowness of a single method approach (Collis and Hussey 2003). The research procedures employed in both the preliminary and main phases are listed as follows:

1. The first phase was a three-round Delphi study of experts on the school sector, involving directors and other officials from school governing agencies (public, independent and catholic) and academics.
2. The second and main phase was a multiple-site, multiple-method study

involving two Case Studies.

The preliminary Delphi study was used to test the perceptions of selected experts on the extent to which SHRM is practiced in the school sector in WA and how attraction / retention of teachers can be improved through SHRM deployment. These two issues were derived from the two key research questions. The main phase of the study consisted of two case studies. Case study A examined the school sector as a single industry, using multiple sites to address research question 1. The Case study A investigated the extent to which SHRM is in place in schools and involved ten (10) schools. Data from each site was examined and a comparative investigation was conducted. A total of thirteen (13) participants, consisting of directors, human resources managers/officers and principals participated.

Case study B targeted teachers and used multiple methods to address research question 2. Case study B was three-pronged and incorporated:

- a. Face-to-face in-depth interviews of principals and human resource managers / officers of selected school organisations.
- b. Electronic in-depth interviews with retired teachers.
- c. An electronic survey of serving school teachers.

This case examined the reasons people are attracted to / or remain as teachers and how the strategic implementation of human resource functions can be used to positively influence attraction and retention outcomes.

## **1.5 Structure of the Thesis**

A five chapter structure has been adopted for this thesis based on the suggestion by (Perry 1995). Chapter one has introduced the research topic and background and outlined the path taken by the researcher to answer the research questions and the purpose and significance of the research.

Chapter two reviews the literature that underpins the arguments of the study. This review explores issues related to schools, their structures, systems and governance and focuses on teachers' key role in realising educational outcomes. This provides a background for the discussion of strategic human resources management strategies and practices that could be adopted to influence teacher attraction and retention. Understanding the effectiveness of what is in-place in schools and the differences that influence outcomes in other industries can help identify what is needed to build a stable teacher workforce. The chapter concludes by presenting a conceptual schema that demonstrates the expected relationships based on the literature.

Chapter three explains the methodology employed for the research. It discusses the ontological and epistemological justification for the overall methodology of the research. The chapter then describes the multiple method (Delphi study and Case study) approaches undertaken and the associated data gathering procedures. Finally, the ethical considerations associated with this method of research are addressed. Chapters four and five respectively cover the results of the data analysis and the conclusions drawn from the study. The results of the analysis from the preliminary Delphi study and the Case studies are presented in chapter four. Chapter five discusses the findings from the study and draws conclusions for the benefit of theorists and practitioners. The limitations of

this study and areas requiring further research efforts are also discussed.

## **1.6 Conclusion**

This chapter began with a discussion of the impact of teacher shortages on the education sector. This was followed with an exploration of how other industries utilise strategic human resource management practices that help them attract and retain staff and achieve their organisational objectives. Two key research questions were posed. The first question focuses on a model of strategic human resource management that is tailored to the needs of schools. The second question asked if strategic human resource management could be utilised more effectively within schools to assist in the attraction and retention of teachers. Given the implementation of SHRM strategies could vary across schools and could depend on a number of factors, such as school ownership, size, or location, the research has involved schools from the public and private sectors.

Integrating the human resource management elements with the business objectives and strategy of the organisation has identified that this leads to improved organisational performance (Pfeffer 1994; Sparrow and Hiltrop 1994; Lundy and Cowling 1996). The chapter argues that the size and criticality of the school sector make this a significant area of research and contends that suitable selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance strategies will help achieve successful outcomes for schools, by helping them attract and retain teachers. The chapter has briefly introduced the methodology and explained the research paradigm. This chapter sets the scene for the subsequent chapters, where the aim is to develop a suitable model of SHRM that will be applicable for schools in Western Australia and elsewhere.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Chapter two examines the literature related to school systems and the critical roles teachers play in helping schools achieve educational objectives. The review examines what attracts people to teaching and why they leave as well as the adequacy of attraction and retention strategies currently in place. Literature on the evolution and practice of SHRM, including theoretical perspectives of SHRM, its elements and industry-wide adoption are also reviewed.

The purpose of this review is to identify and build the relevant theoretical foundation to inform the research questions and help shape the conceptual framework of the study. Previously published research materials, such as books and journals, as well as ongoing research from other sources, including reports, newsletters, and websites have been used as recommended by (Perry 1995; Veal 2005). This review explores how a SHRM approach could help resolve some of the issues surrounding teacher attraction and retention in the school sector.

Attraction and retention are important for a successful people management and one way to achieve positive results through the utilisation of relevant human resource management strategies (De Cieri, Kramar, Noe, Hollenbeck, Gehart and Wright 2005). This makes it important to understand the peculiar nature of schools as organisations and their differences from other organisations. The chapter also reviews SHRM adoption in the school sector and how a school model of SHRM might influence teacher attraction and retention. Furthermore, potential SHRM strategies for building a steady

teacher workforce are outlined.

## **2.2 Realising School Goals – Teachers as Key Stakeholders**

The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights Article 26 (UN 1948) stresses the importance of education and the right to education for everyone because of the need for human justice and social equity. Countries all over the world have been heeding this call to provide education for their people as education aids economic growth by generating skilled labour and enables political participation through modern ideas and attitudes (Bishop 1989). For example, Australia's national goals for schooling in the 21<sup>st</sup> century confirm that the future of Australia depends upon everyone acquiring the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills and values required for a productive and rewarding life. These national goals set guidelines for education authorities so they can effectively engage young people to enable them to contribute to the country's social, cultural and economic development, in a local and wider global context (SCRGSP 2006).

The Federal Education, Science and Training department in Australia recognises that the strength of democratic institutions and community life and continuing economic growth depend on realising the potential of all children and young people. This is particularly so, as they will be required to display initiative and innovation in a rapidly changing, knowledge-driven, globalising world. Through the delivery of educational services and the knowledge that is transmitted to students, schools are a key institutions for achieving these goals (Davies et al. 2002; DEST 2003).

In Australia, the goals of education cascade from a national level, to the state, district, local school, subject, unit plan and down to lesson plan objectives. The goals at the national or state level consist of general statements to denote a theme or concern. However, at the district level, these general goals narrow down to specific goals, objectives or school statements that give the respective teachers and principals (headmasters) a more focused objective. The goals and objectives do not remain static but are subject to changes to ensure they are current and relevant (Ornstein and Levine 2006).

At the school level, the goals are thus statements “*that set forth the purposes of the school system.... Goals express what is important to the school system overall and are undergirded by the beliefs, values, traditions and culture of the school system’s community*” (Norton, Webb, Dlugosh and Sybouts 1996:111-112). Several stakeholders contribute to the realisation of school goals; however, one important contributor to the success of the school is the role played by the teacher. School systems, the role of teachers and problems being faced by schools are reviewed in the subsections that follow.

### **2.2.1 School Systems, Structures and Governance**

The main reason schools exist is to educate and transmit knowledge. This ranges from inculcating the traditions and values of the society, to providing society with sustainable economic growth by developing a suitable and qualified work force (Silver 1994). The philosophical goal of socialisation and subjectification enables students to practice moral enhancement activities that shape their lives as well as frame values and outlooks



for the benefit of the individual and society (Preston and Symes 1994; Ralph 1999).

Schools are “one of the most enduring and successful of all institutions, and will continue to be” (NEA 2003:43). The structure of school systems can be better understood when viewed as social systems from both ‘macro’ [broader] and ‘micro’ [looking within the individual schools themselves] perspectives (Foster 1987). One type of school structure based on the macro perspective is the educational bureaucracy, which in Australia includes the Federal department of education, the large state departments of education and the regional offices of the state department of education. The functional goals of such structures include administration, control, efficiency, integration and public accountability (Foster 1987).

Another depiction of structure is the ‘educational ladder’, namely the pathways by which individuals move from one level to another. For Australia, this structure refers to levels, starting with Pre-school, primary and the secondary schools, which are mandatory for all Australians between 6 – 15 years of age. Post-secondary school options are not prescribed, but a vibrant tertiary sector exists and includes colleges of Technical and Further Education [TAFE], colleges of advanced education [CAE] and Universities (Foster 1987) as well as alternative private providers of Certified education.

Schools can also be structured according to their social or demographic composition. This includes the geographical locations of schools, such as country or metropolitan, limits on school enrolments [for example, zoning which limits choices],

socio-economic status of parents which can limit or promote access to private schools, religious affiliation as a number of schools are denominational, sex [single-sex or co-educational schools] and the ownership of schools (Silver 1994). In this last category, schools are either in the public [government] sector or in the private [non-government and independent school] sector (Foster 1987; Seifert 1996)

Within the Australian context, government owned schools are the direct responsibility of the Director-General (or equivalent) of Education in each state or territory. The main source of funding is the relevant state or territory government. Independent schools are private organisations incorporated under the Associations of Incorporation Act and are self-governed. On the other hand, system schools are groups of schools administered centrally by a church or religious body. The largest groups of system schools are the Catholic schools (ABS 2008). The non-government schools abide by all the state or territory government regulatory authorities and receive supplementary funds from their state or territory government (SCRGSP 2006). Regardless of a school's classification, the Australian government provides varying degrees of funding (Foster 1987).

In Western Australian, the structuring of schools based on ownership is consistent with the above National arrangement. For example, schools in WA are categorised into government and non-government schools. The non-government sector includes Catholic schools and the Independent sector. The Independent schools are comprised of the Anglican, Baptist, Uniting Church, Seventh Day Adventist and other schools with or without religious affiliations (MCEETYA 1999).

Having examined school structures from a macro perspective, the micro perspective involves looking at groups that make up a school's composition. Staffing includes administrators, teachers, students, ancillary staff, and even parents (although parents are not considered as part of the school's population). Each of these groups depends on the others to achieve efficient use of the school's resources. Hence, their structures and functions cannot be left to chance but rather aimed to achieve efficiency and effectiveness for the school organisation (Foster 1987).

The following texts discuss the roles of some of the school stakeholders. Firstly, the role of the Federal Government is to initiate and coordinate education policies from a national perspective and to provide additional funding to the States for other educational pursuits. The Federal Government is the dominant player for dealing with funding levels and formula, pay setting, and control over and testing of the National Curriculum (Sinclair, Ironside and Seifert 1996). The State on the other hand operates primary and secondary education using its own educational bodies or departments.

Each State Government is required to have its own plan and vision for the public schools within the period they are in power. The State Education Department sets up schools and decides basic educational policies. Next, it appoints the principals (who as school administrators implement policies at a school level) and teachers for public schools (Foster 1987; DETWA 2002). Some non-government organisations play a co-ordinating role within the catholic and independent school sectors. The stakeholders include the National Catholic Education Commission, the National Council for Independent Schools, the Australian High School Principals Association, the national

organisations of teachers and parent groups (Foster 1987). These organisations operate at national as well as at state levels.

Schools do not work in isolation from their communities. Rather, they work in collaborations and share responsibilities between teachers, parents, business and industry, other schools, community groups and other educational institutions. These collaborations aim to enrich the experiences and opportunities of students and teachers (Wilmore 1992). As already discussed, the roles of the different stakeholders vary depending on whether the schools are public or private ones and whether the governance model adopted is centralised or control is devolved via school-based-management. For instance, public schools are considered a public service and have central control, which leads to limited degree of professional freedom (Murphy 1991).

The private sector shares similar functions with the public sector but has some differences. For example, in the private schools, the principal is the head and exercises more control over staff. Such principals are usually able to hire and fire staff, select staff for promotion and participate in decision-making at the school board level, which in turn allows them to create power relations with key members of staff (Gaziel 1983; Barnet 1984). Being able to make political and administrative decisions affects the access to and utilisation of resources important for realising and improving the quality of school outcomes (Jecks 1974).

The task facing the stakeholders has always been to determine how the schools can be reshaped by new and innovative developments and strategies for the future

(Davies et al. 2002). For example, the Gallop government in Western Australia saw the need for all students in the schools to achieve the highest quality in learning in order to deal effectively with the opportunities and challenges within and outside the learning environment. Their goal was for children in Western Australia to have the opportunity to reach their learning and skills potential and contribute them to the society (DETTWA 2004b; DETWA 2004e). The next subsection reviews the importance of the roles of teachers in primary and secondary schools.

### **2.2.2 Teachers as Key Stakeholders**

The internal and external stakeholders in an organisation help determine the efficiency and the effectiveness of that organisation. However, with the varying set of stakeholders with their multiple interests, a number of criteria linked to the organisational goals are needed to help measure the effectiveness. These include financial measures, productivity, growth, customer satisfaction and quality. The leaders in the organisations ensure these criteria are designed according to priority and the power of influence of the various stakeholders (Robbins 1997). It is therefore important to understand the influence of stakeholders for meeting the goals of the schools (Foster 1987).

The teachers' role is critical for the school to realise their outcomes and objectives. The term teacher is used to connote a host of teaching staff with expertise knowledge in certain subject areas. Their role is to capture and impart the school curriculum to the students. A common view is that the key to a successful education is teacher quality. The quality of the teacher has been claimed to be the most important indicator of student performance, rather than class size, economic status or others

(Davies et al. 2002; NEA 2003).

Much importance is thus placed on the teacher. The communities they belong to express strong interests and expect teachers to show positive contributions by being examples to their students in morals, character, dress and manners (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Paul Albert, a one - time Director General with WA DET supported this view. In the Welcome Manual for prospective new teacher recruits to Western Australia (WA), Albert stressed that education has an important role but a more important role is that of the teacher who helps shape young lives (DETTWA 2004a). The aim of any educational system is to maintain sufficient and quality teachers in the profession through the means of recruitment and development. Such a system needs to attract the 'best' people into the teaching profession (Goh and Atputhasamy 2001) through improved strategies for attraction and retention (DETTWA 2004b).

### **2.2.3 Strategic Human Resource Management and Teacher Shortage**

An important role for SHRM in schools could entail having appropriate attraction and retention strategies that could help schools obtain improvements in teacher shortages (DEST 2003; Ross and Hutchings 2003; Webster et al. 2004) and achieve learning goals by attracting quality teachers (DEST 2003; DETWA 2004b). According to the SHRM theory, the strategic integration and alignment of human resource practices with strategic objectives improves quality of work life, reduces turnover and thus improves teacher attraction and retention. This section reviews the underlying factors that motivate people to go into or leave the teaching profession.

### **2.2.3.1 What Attracts People to Teaching**

According to Ornstein and Levine (2006), becoming a teacher starts with the persuasion to choose teaching as a career. However, the motives could be idealistic, practical, many and complex. This is partly because the teaching profession possesses some unique attributes. First, it suffers a status anomaly, for instance on the one hand, teachers are praised for dedication and commitment to education, on the other hand, others ridicule teaching as easy work. It is regarded as a profession, but pays less than many other professions that require less education (Lortie 2002).

Individuals have to be attracted to take up teaching places and remain in them. Studies that examine teachers' preferences in teaching shed light on what motivates them (Preston 2000; Webster et al. 2004). For instance, a survey of teachers carried out by the Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) found that 30.7% of the respondents enjoy working with children, 22.0% have a desire to teach, 11.5% were attracted through a recruitment campaign or the positive impact of a role model. A further 8.6% were attracted to the employment conditions and 8.3% have a desire to make a difference while others were attracted because of their educational value and care for humans (Skilbeck and Connell 2003) .

One group of factors that attract people to teaching is thus non – monetary. These may be personal preferences or intrinsic reasons. For instance, the desire and joy to work with children, intellectual fulfillment from imparting knowledge and making a valuable contribution to society are examples of intrinsic reasons why people are attracted to teaching (Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Reid and Thornton 2000; CRTTE 2003; Skilbeck and Connell 2003; Ornstein and Levine 2006). People are attracted to

this profession because it not only enables them offer services but also gives them personal satisfaction (Lester 1986) as they see their students' accomplishments in life. The knowledge that the students success in life is linked to the teacher will make such teachers become more enthusiastic (Ornstein and Levine 2006).

Job satisfaction has been given as one reason why people consider going into teaching (Hunt 2002). The most common components of job satisfaction include realistic workloads, manageable class sizes, accessible curriculum materials and teaching resources; acknowledgement and reinforcement of good performance; career pathways; reasonable salaries and opportunities for professional development (Skilbeck and Connell 2003). Clearly, teachers with high job satisfaction are most likely to remain in teaching (Norton 2001).

Another reason people go into teaching is their personal philosophy of education and this reasoning has a long history (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Medieval educators preserved and institutionalised knowledge as a contribution to Western education. Ancient Greece and Rome during the classical periods encouraged education to cultivate human excellence. The religious reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries linked religion with education and people officially considered members of the religion were allowed to become teachers (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Even in today's schools, people with certain philosophical beliefs take to teaching because of those beliefs; an example of this is the Steiner Waldorf education (Nicol 2007), where the teacher has a sacred task to develop the child to fulfill his own unique destiny in life (Waldorf 2007).



An important factor which qualified young graduates claim as a reason they go into teaching is the job security (Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Webster et al. 2004). Other reasons, particularly for males, are the extrinsic factors such as holidays, promotion prospects and the opinion of others (Reid and Caudwell 1997). Skilbeck and Connell (2003) point out that student attraction to a teaching career also depends on conditional factors such as their family background and their personal experience of teachers. For instance, men can be discouraged from accepting a profession in primary teaching because of negative perceptions of working with children (Hutchings 2002; Lewis 2002).

It would be useful for an organisation to understand the underlying reasons their teachers are attracted to teaching in their school. Such knowledge if known at pre-employment stage could help the school more effectively manage the teachers. One way of knowing is through the recruitment process (Heneman and Judge 2003). This is where the human resource function comes into play, because a key responsibility of the HR function is to attract the right employees into the organisation (Diepen, Iterson and Roe 2006).

#### **2.2.3.2 Why Teachers Leave**

Several factors have been identified as reasons for teachers leaving the profession. These include monetary rewards, personal and or organisational issues, individual school characteristics, such as school size, geographical location and the sector type and the organisational conditions teachers work under. These reasons are further elaborated in this sub-section. It is however important to understand the labour turnover index in any organisation [which is a measure of the ‘leavers’] (Ornstein and Levine 2006) so

that matters that precipitate unnecessary turnover can be addressed.

‘Leavers’ in any organisation are categorised into four distinct sets of employees. The first group are the ‘stars’ who perform well and are positively aligned to the organisations’ values. The second category of employees simply live the values of the organisation; they tend to fall behind in performance but will benefit from training. The third category does not share in the values of the organisation and have sub-standard performance. The fourth group of employees do not share the values of the organisation, but perform well regardless. The organisation will manage this situation by dismissing these employees with ‘best performance’ rather than keep up with their disruptive effects on other employees (Welch 2001). It is certain that some employees will leave an organisation, hence the importance of regularly matching employee supply with demand (Bohlander and Snell 2007). Furthermore, although the smartest and most talented employees usually are the most mobile and more likely to leave, the causes of employee turnover remains a complex subject (Abbasi and Hollman 2000).

The variety of reasons people leave an organisation include; conflicting demands and lack of support from administrators to realise goals (Ornstein and Levine 2006) work - related issues such as ‘hard’ working conditions, poor pay, better job alternatives, difficulty working with supervisors, lack of training, pressure from non-work related issues, such as domestic problems or ill-health (Bunting 2005). Others leave because the organisation’s goals do not match their own individual goals, interests and or personality (Schneider 1987). Other factors that can affect teacher turnover in the school sector include teacher and school characteristics and organisational conditions

(Murnane, Singer, Willet and Olsen 1991; Ingersoll 2001b). These factors are discussed below.

**Teacher personal characteristics:** Reasons in this category include personality issues such as age, gender, family situations, level of education, a teachers' field of study, experiences, social contexts, and occupation preferences (Preston 2000; Mitchell, Brooks, Holton and Lee 2001; Ingersoll 2001b). Using age as an example, younger age workers are more likely to leave than older ones (Kirby and Grissmer 1993; Ingersoll 2001b; Chelli and Rosti 2002; Heijden 2003). Likewise, the highest attrition rates evident among secondary teachers are those with qualifications in science (physics and chemistry), special education, mathematics and among those teachers with the lowest pay (Boe, Bobbitt and Cook 1997). In regards to gender, younger women have a higher tendency to leave than younger men; whereas older women are less likely to leave than older men. Also women with children are more likely to remain in teaching than single women and those without children (Billingsley 1993).

**School characteristics:** The school characteristics include the school level, school size, geographical location (which can be metropolitan, rural or remote), the sector type and the socio-economic status of the student population. Research suggests that in other industries, employee tend to identify more with smaller groups (Tyson 2006), however for schools, teachers seem to prefer larger school environments to smaller ones (Ingersoll 2001b). Another factor is the class size; some teachers leave the school or the profession because there are too many students in the class (Billingsley 1993) .

The geographic location of a school is a key factor that can influence teacher turnover, with teachers in rural and more remote areas more likely to leave than those in the urban or metropolitan schools (Ingersoll 2001a). Much effort is required to attract and retain staff in the regional or remote regions (Miles, Marshall, Rolfe and Noonan 2003; Dow 2004). This is particularly so in WA because of the remoteness and lack of facilities in the rural areas. The socio-economic level of where the school is located is a contributor as well. Research suggests that high poverty public schools experience higher levels of turnover than the more affluent public schools (Bryke, Lee and Smith 1990; Darling - Hammond 2003; Ingersoll 2003a). Thus, it is very difficult to be able to attract and retain teachers in these high poverty areas (Hare, Heap and Raack 2001).

**Organisational conditions:** A workplace that is interested in and provides suitable conditions to professionally reward its employees seems to be in a better position to attract and retain good people (Fullan 2001). Organisational conditions can be divided into work conditions like the compensation structure and level of administrative support, and school conditions like the degree of conflict and strife within the organisation and the extent of employee input and influence over organisation policies (Ingersoll 2001a). Salary is a contentious issue for teachers in Australia.

The starting salary is comparable to other professions, but teachers reach the top of their salary scale after eight to eleven years on entering the profession (DEST 2003). This compares poorly to many other professions that have higher salary progressions during this period and provide greater opportunities for promotion. Teachers reach the top of their salary range and stay on this rate till retirement, unless they choose a

different pathway in the profession, such as being assigned to administrative duties (ASEERC 1998). This disadvantage in salary progression for senior teachers is one reason teachers leave the classroom, the sector or the profession entirely (Buckingham 2008). Hence, suggestions have called for the need to rethink teacher career progressions with considerations for career structures, reward for proficient and highly accomplished teachers and recognition for teachers who take other roles outside teaching such as mentoring, community leadership (DEST 2003).

An adequate level of administrative support and improved relations between administrators and teachers will also help reduce the rate of teacher attrition (Billingsley 1993; Hare et al. 2001; Ingersoll 2001a). Similarly, involving teachers in decision making is likely to cut back on the number leaving the profession (Billingsley 1993). A supportive, positive non-‘toxic’ environment that is reliable, enriches and builds trust amongst the employees, and is capable of generating a sense of comradeship which would also help keep employees (Abbasi and Hollman 2000). As it is, disruptive social and professional interactions within a school environment school often lead to higher turnover (Norton 2001). Therefore, maintaining a healthy school climate becomes critical since the commitment and retention of employees depend on the trust and sound relationships with their peers and supervisors (Dobbs 2000).

Lack of job satisfaction is another reason teachers leave (Ingersoll and Smith 2003; Webster et al. 2004). Job satisfaction could entail how employees perceive the relationship between their work role and the fulfillment of values important to them (Locke 1996; Bunting 2005). Teachers’ response to the absence of job satisfaction is no different, many resign from their positions (Ornstein and Levine 2006). One source of

dissatisfaction amongst teachers is their inability to balance work with non-work commitments (Kyriacou and Coulthard 2000; Webster et al. 2004). Balancing the inside work and outside work life of an employee is important for schools and providing flexible work arrangements can help (Fisher, Schoenfeldt and Shaw 2006). Another source of dissatisfaction is the perceived drop in the status of teaching as a profession (CAF 2007) as it adversely affects attraction to or the desire to remain in the profession (Fullan 2001). This is particularly noted as an issue in Western Australia (OECD 2003).

Another reason for leaving that is specific to Australia is that superannuation arrangements in several States favour early retirement at the age of 55 years (DEST 2003). Financial incentives for early retirement have the indirect impact of encouraging teachers over this age to accept an offer of early retirement (Go`mez - Mejia, Balkin and Cardy 2004). This reinforces the perception that teaching is no longer a job for life (Troman and Woods 2000) and indirectly impacts retention.

The decision to leave the teaching profession may also be due to stress from fatigue and frustrations (Go`mez-Mejia, Balkin and Cardy 2004). Stress could be the ‘aches’ and ‘pains’ that a person experiences in keeping up with the pace of work and domestic life (Cooper 2006). In the context of the workplace, a job related-stress develops as result of the employees physiological and psychological responses towards a type of condition or stressor at the work place. Stressors include long hours, high workloads, conflicting or ambiguous demands, fast paced work, strict deadlines, job insecurity, interpersonal conflict, shift work, organisational politics, an unfavourable organisational climate, lack of communication, harsh or controlling supervisory styles,

or work/family conflicts (Zellars 2002).

Within the school context, stress could be aggravated by the need to produce detailed paper work (Fullan 2001), and changing standards for assessing student performance as evidenced by a study of schools in four states in America. In that study, teachers at the elementary (primary) and secondary level became stressed as the states and districts introduced new standards of assessing student performance which was difficult to implement (Ornstein and Levine 2006). A similar program based on the principle of applying and enforcing standards to assess students academics was introduced into Australia under the caption of Outcome-Based Education [OBE] (Berlach and McNaught 2007), sometimes referred to as Essential Learnings or Outcomes and Standards based education (Donnelly 2007). The OBE is premised on:

*“focusing and organising everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences. This means starting with a picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organising the curriculum, instructions and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens”* (Dykman 1994: 1).

The proposed introduction of OBE in Australia and WA schools was challenged by teachers, principals and the teachers union and had little support from the community because of the potential negative impact on the teaching population (Berlach and McNaught 2007). Western Australian teachers claimed they would ‘*drown*’ under the excessive and time-consuming assessment methods and some left the profession because of the threat of OBE (DETTWA 2003; AEU 2004; Berlach 2004). In fact, for

some teachers, this provided an ideal opportunity to make career changes (Hiatt 2005).

Another reason for WA teachers leaving the profession was the state's booming and buoyant economy. Some teachers saw this as a good time to move into the mining industry and out of the classroom (Berlach and McNaught 2007). According to Labour Economics Office statistics, WA's economic growth from 2006 - 2007 was 6.3% while the States Treasury forecast for 2007- 2008 was projected at 7.5% with another 5% increase for 2008-2009 (DEEWR 2008) as the state benefited from high economic growth from its natural resources.

Discipline problems are another reason teachers leave the profession. Schools with lower levels of student discipline problems tend to experience lower levels of teachers leaving as compared to those with higher discipline problems (Ingersoll 2001b). Another identified teacher shortage problem is the feminisation of the teaching profession. In this case, perceived low occupational status of the teaching profession is one reason male teachers are not keen working at the primary school level (King 1998; Thorton and Bricheno 2000; Ashley 2001).

Other industries have found that employee turnover affects both the individual and the organisation. To the organisation, the total cost of losing an employee can include administrative severance payments, unemployment compensation (if they remain unemployed), replacement costs (such as costs for advertising and recruitment, testing, orientation and training of new employees). Indirect costs also accrue due to reduced production and potentially upset customers (Pinkovitz, Moskal and Green



1997; Netswera, Rankhumise and Mavundla 2005). Retention plans should be put in place to reduce employee turnover (Mitchell et al. 2001).

Similarly, a schools' inability to retain teachers is costly, whatever the reasons (Abbasi and Hollman 2000). Costs include money spent on training the departing teachers and the compensation payments made out to teachers (Brown and Ralph 1998). Upset parents and children due to disruptions to children's schooling, loss of experienced teachers and loss of continuity in the education program are negative impacts of teacher turnover. These all translate to schools not being able to achieve the educational outcomes (Ingersoll 2001a; Ingersoll and Smith 2003), hence the need for suitable and effective strategies for reducing teacher shortages.

### **2.3 Strategic HRM Evolution - Background and Theoretical Perspectives**

Strategic Human Resource Management [SHRM] emerged in response to increased global competition, the demand for cost effectiveness and efficiency and in recognition that the management of people needs to be a number one priority if organisations are to achieve their business objectives (Mello 2006). The effective application of SHRM provides competitive advantages and improved performance because it aligns the human resource functions of recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and management, rewarding and developing employees to the organisation's goals (Pfeffer 1994; Lundy and Cowling 1996; Armstrong 2000a). This section summarises the origins, theoretical basis and elements of SHRM and explains how the typical industry model of SHRM is operationalised. The contingency theory implications for adopting SHRM in other industries are also reviewed.

The employment relationship involves, as a minimum, two parties, namely the employer and the employee. The employer is the corporate body that is separate and distinct from individual members of the organisation. Employees are required to obey all reasonable and legitimate instructions given by their employers and are subordinate to the employer (Farnham and Pimlott 1998). Three main theoretical concepts used to explain the employee - employer relationship are Unitarism, Pluralism and Marxism (Fox 1966) and these concepts are discussed briefly below.

The unitarist ideology recommends a team approach between management and employees to achieve common organisational objectives, and trade unionism is de-emphasised (Fox 1966; Storey 1997). In contrast, pluralism recognises the enterprise as composed of two groups, namely, labour and management, each with different objectives, some of which conflict while others coincide. Trade unions are recognised as the legitimate representative of labour and conflicts arising from the clash of interests are resolved if possible by collective bargaining and compromise (Purcell and Sisson 1983; Farnham and Pimlott 1998; Burchill 2008). The Marxist theory on the other hand argues that the pluralist view is one sided. This perspective stresses the need to account for causes of industrial conflicts rather than just the consequences (Hyman 1975).

According to the Marxist view, conflict is closely linked with the contradictory tendencies found in the capitalist economic system (Hyman 1975). In summary, whilst unitarism does not expect conflicts, pluralism sees conflicts as a problem and Marxism argues that conflicts should be accepted as part of the wider class conflict (Fox 1966; Hyman 1975). In practice, unitarist theory has been more successful in countries and

organisations with low rates of union membership, where authoritarian management traditions or high unemployment levels prevail; whereas pluralism was more appropriate if industrial relations legislation and conflict was entrenched, as in Australia and the United Kingdom (Nankervis et al. 1999).

Of the three types of resources, financial, technological and human in an organisation, management theorists suggest the most difficult to manage or exploit is the 'human resource' (Nankervis et al. 1999). As well as being based on a contract of employment, the employee – employer relationship is based on a psychological or social contract, where employees exchange their skills and commitment for pay and other rewards like job security and benefits (Ancona, Kochan, Scully, Van Maanen and Westney 2005; Noe et al. 2007). One challenge before scholars has been how to help the employer devise ways to effectively manage and maximise the benefits in the employer - employee relationship to improve organisational performance.

Human Resources professionals have been developing theories, policies, procedures and practices to better manage the relationship, noting however the need for establishing contingencies for each individual unique relationship (Bernardin 2007). These new concepts of human relations are traceable to the 1924 to 1932 Hawthorne surveys, where Elton Mayor found that increased productivity was linked to the amount of attention paid to employees, which started a shift toward employee motivation taking centre stage (Entrekin and Court 2001). In Australia, the management of human resources developed over three stages during the last century.

The first stage, from 1900 to 1940, focused on welfare and administration. The second stage, from the 1940s and mid 1970s, adapted to include staffing and training, personnel management and industrial relations. The third stage, which began after the mid 1970s through to the 1990s involved the introduction of the human resource management [HRM] theory (Nankervis et al. 1999) and originated from the 1970s development of 'human capital theory' (Armstrong and Long 1994). Although this takes its roots from the 1940s and the aforementioned Hawthorne studies, it was repackaged by scholars from the Harvard Business School and other American writers (Fombrun, Titchy and Devanna 1984).

During the 1980s, HRM was seen as an approach to employment management which sought to achieve competitive advantage through the deployment of a highly committed workforce (Storey 1997). In its early phase, the concern was whether HRM was really something 'new' and different from the traditional personnel management. For some, the emergence of HRM was seen as *"a continuing effort to play down the adversarial aspects of industrial relations, to subordinate the firm's dealings with externally based organisations to its individual relationships with its own employees"* (Ulman 1992:178). Despite the different interpretations on the true meaning and purpose, HRM has moved forward in most countries.

Human resource management is not just a new word for personnel management, but rather, it connotes a different approach that is linked with business outcomes for the management of people (Storey 1997). Nankervis and colleagues (1999) argue that personnel management relates to the people related functions or activities of

recruitment, selection, training, salary administration and industrial relations, when they are performed without relationships between the activities, or the overall organisational objectives. The assumption for HRM is that the people related activities are integrated with each other and with the strategic organisational objectives.

The theory of HRM assumes the underlying interests of management and workers are similar, hence, the values underpinning HRM are predominantly unitaristic, in contrast to the dominant values of traditional personnel management. The emphasis is on individual-organisational linkages, as opposed to the group representation or industrial relations approach that emphasises collective and pluralist values (Guest 1989; Millmore, Lewis, Saunders, Thornhill and Morrow 2007). The foregoing can vary across different countries and or industry contexts. For instance, a unitarist model of HRM is more apparent in America and other countries such as Malaysia and Singapore, which assume common interests between employers and employees. The pluralist HRM approach is more suited to countries with entrenched industrial relations, like Australia and UK (Nankervis et al. 1999) .

It also needs to be recognised that HRM theory emerged from other disciplines, such as organisational behaviour; psychology, business strategy and systems theory (Analoui 2007). This has led to HRM theory being underpinned by four theoretical features, which are namely, beliefs and assumptions, strategy, the role of line managers and the levers of HRM implementation (Storey 1997) .

### **2.3.1 Beliefs and Assumptions of HRM**

A fundamental belief and assumption of HRM is that human resource more than other factors of production, make the difference. To realise benefits, managers are therefore encouraged to put people first (Burke 2006) as the management of people is a key factor in bringing about a competitive edge (Lengnick-Hall and Lengnick-Hall 1990). Human resources, through their efforts, knowledge, capabilities, resources, relationships and decisions can place an organisation ahead of its competitors (Hamel and Prahalad 1989; Watson 2005).

The central principle of HRM is the effective utilisation of employees to achieve organisational objectives. The HRM practitioner, rather than just being an employee advocate, is involved in organisational efficiency, effectiveness, productivity, labour flexibility and competitive HR advantage. This theory focuses on the need to apply relevant human resource management approaches so the full potential of human resources can be realised and are not manipulated or exploited in the same way as financial or technological resources (Nankervis et al. 1999).

### **2.3.2 Strategy of HRM**

The second feature of HRM concerns strategy. The term ‘strategy’ was borrowed from the military in the early days of civilisation whereby a range of principles and ideas helped armies obtain victories on battlefields. Businesses have adopted the same principles to help win their business battles (Gronfeldt and Strother 2006). There are various ways to view strategy. From a business perspective, strategy can be defined as a set of fundamental or critical choices about the ends and means of a business (Child 1972). Gronfeldt and Strother (2006) define strategy as “a pattern or plan that integrates

an organisation's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole" (p70). Chandler (1962) views strategy from the organisation's long-term goals and objectives, as the appropriate use of action and the distribution of needed resources to help achieve set goals.

The long-term development strategy of a business is determined by the environmental opportunities and threats and the manner in which the business deploys its human resource assets to maintain or gain a competitive edge. The adopted strategy distinguishes an organisation from its competitors (Purcell 1999). Hence, strategy is the grand plan adopted through employees, to help realise the business mission (Go`mez - Mejia et al. 2004). Strategy may also include the pattern of decisions management applies regarding HR policies and practices (Bratton and Gold 2007). Strategy helps everyone understand what the organisation wants to become, where it wants to go and how it means to get there (Armstrong 2000a). Furthermore, strategies can be to tackle issues and problems that organisations are faced with, such as growth, survival, turnaround, stability, innovation or leadership (Aguinis 2007).

Corporate and business level strategies evolve into HR plans (Bratton and Gold 2007) so that HR policies are built from well designed personnel practices that fit into the corporate business strategy. The strategic nature of HRM is a distinguishing characteristic that makes it a matter of interest to chief executives and senior management teams (Storey 1997). Managers (Chief executives and senior management teams) are encouraged to develop strategies and design HR policies that are capable of influencing the employee's behaviour (Millmore et al. 2007).

### **2.3.3 The roles of Line Managers in HRM**

The third feature of HRM relates to the roles of line managers. If human resources are critical for the business, then HRM should be too important to be left in the hands of operational personnel specialists. Line managers are seen as crucial to the effective delivery of HRM policies (Lundy and Cowling 1996; Storey 1997). The management of human resource can be grouped under five key activities – staffing, retention, development, adjustment and managing change and these demand shared responsibilities between line and HR managers. These five key HRM activities are described below.

Staffing activities identify work requirements, determines the range of skills needed for a job and fills positions through recruitment, selection and or promotion. Retention strategies include the range of strategies aimed at keeping an employee and include rewarding employees, workplace relations that ensure harmonious employee/manager relationships and maintaining safe, healthy workplaces. Development preserves and improves employee competences. Adjustment maintains compliance with HR policies and business strategies of the organisation. Managing change enhances the organisation's ability to cope with changes in its external and internal environments (Cascio 2006). Typically, HR provides technical expertise whilst line managers use this expertise to manage people effectively. For example, under retention, line managers' responsibility includes treating employees fairly, resolving conflicts, promoting teamwork and providing pay increases based on merit, whilst the HR department devises the compensation and benefits system to be used (Cascio 2006).



#### **2.3.4 Levers of HRM implementation**

The fourth feature concerns the key levers used for HRM implementation. A notable element is the move away from emphasising personnel policies to the management of 'culture' in the organisation (Storey 1998a). Organisational culture is referred to as the characteristic norms, beliefs, values and practices of an organisation within which employment decisions are made and employees work on a day-to-day basis. Culture can thus be a very effective control system (Williams and Ferris 2002). Another definition claims culture is the pattern of basic assumptions invented, discovered, or developed in an organisation that supports the organisation's pursuit of excellence in performance (Schein 1992; Millmore et al. 2007).

Culture is an important feature of SHRM because an enhanced culture promotes performance by building consensus, flexibility, and commitment (Storey 1997). For instance, cultural consensus helps establish a common set of values and beliefs on fundamental objectives and priorities. This culture enhances flexibility where restrictions, such as restrictions on movement between separate jobs, are removed so productivity can improve. Beyond the willingness to work flexibly, this culture leads to committed employees who 'go the extra mile' in pursuit of organisational goals (Storey 1997). Commitment here refers to the "strength of an individual employee's identification with and involvement in the organization" (Scott - Ladd 2001: 43). The organisational culture could therefore be a major reason employees are attracted more to one company than another (Bowen 2002). Hence, some authors argue that organisational culture is the key to competitiveness (Ouchi 1981; Pascal 1981).

There is considerable evidence in the literature that employees will be at their best if they are fully committed to the organisation (Lundy 1994; Storey 1997). This high commitment management model suggests employees' high commitment is produced from self regulation rather than a response from external pressures (Armstrong 2000a). Consequently, HRM theory predicts more positive performance outcomes are likely if appropriate human resource policies are employed to drive its implementation in an organisation. The HRM policies define the organisation's philosophies and values on how people should be treated and ideally, should promote mutuality. This refers to mutual goals, influence, respect, rewards and responsibility; policies of mutuality are more likely to elicit commitment which in turn yields better performance (Legge 1999; Armstrong 2006) and enhances the likelihood of committed employees wanting to stay with the organisation (Guest 1995).

Another view of the HRM model is that it can be soft or hard. The 'soft' approach to HRM aims at enhancing employee commitment (Beardwell and Clark 2007) and communication is central. Soft HRM focuses on the less tangible, subjective nature of the organisation and therefore the 'soft' approach seeks the involvement of employees through consultation and empowerment (Nankervis et al. 1999). On the other hand, 'hard' HRM depicts "the quantitative, calculative and business-strategic aspects of managing the 'headcount resource' in as 'rational' a way as for any other factor of production" (Storey 1992:29). HRM in the 'hard' sense represents 'tough mindedness' and objective measures with emphasis on the strategic role human resources plays in achieving organisational goals (Beardwell and Clark 2007).

It is also important to note that HRM theories “cannot be divorced from the socio-economic, political and industrial relations climates in which they operate” (Nankervis et al. 1999:19) and the application of HRM is not a size that fits all as it varies from one country to another (Singh 1992). This understanding will help practitioners decide on the applicability of HRM theories within the settings of their own countries and industries. For instance, whilst unitarist or pluralist HRM varies between countries, the application of hard or soft HRM approaches depends on the industry environment (Nankervis et al. 1999).

A key goal of HRM is to ensure that organisations have the “right numbers, types, and skill mixes of employees at an appropriate time and cost to meet present and future requirements” (Nankervis et al. 1999:22). Awareness of where organisations are going in the future, the nature of external and internal labour markets and the most effective strategies for matching labour demand and supply are critical for success. Other objectives of HRM include implementing effective strategies for attracting, choosing, and keeping employees productive, satisfied and motivated to contribute to the organisation’s progress (Nankervis et al. 1999).

Human Resources theory is not without its critics. There are some critics who think HRM is no different from the traditional personnel management; others cannot clearly understand what HRM consists of, while others query the existence of the alignment of the goals of the individual and the organisation (Hendry 1995) . Although the concept has been established in reality, it appears its meaning, impact on employment relationship and influence on organisational performance still lacks universal acceptance (Beardwell and Clark 2007).

Theory underpins the practice of strategic human resource management (SHRM). Strategic human resource management integrates human resources policy with business strategy to gain competitive advantage (Millmore and Baker 1996). The term competitive advantage “is doing something better than rivals, in the eyes of key stakeholders” and “the extent to which an organisation delivers value superior to that of its competitors” (Kenny 2005:45, 98). Competitive advantage differentiation implies one organisation stands out amongst its competitors (Kenny 2005). An organisation thus has a competitive advantage over its competitors when its products or services cannot be easily imitated or copied (Bernardin 2007). The value of human resources is its ability to develop and exploit rare characteristics, the ability to develop and nurture characteristics that competitors cannot easily copy and better coordination of the organisations’ policies and practices (Beardwell and Claydon 2007).

The role of management in sustaining competitive advantage involves building, recognising, developing and applying the organisation’s core and supplementary enabling capabilities (Millmore et al. 2007). In summary, managing the employee – employer relationship has changed over the years from an administrative and maintenance function to take on a more strategic function within the organisation - strategic human resource management (Entrekin and Court 2001). Under SHRM, the HR strategies should consider the interests of all the stakeholders in the organisation (Armstrong 2006). Hence HR managers become a partner who represents management and advocates for workers; they assume broader roles in overall organisational strategy to help create the competitive advantage (Nankervis et al. 1999).

## **2.4 Strategic Human Resource Management in Practice**

Strategic Human Resource Management functions link employee management and the organisation's business goals. "Practices can make an important, practical difference in terms of three key organisational outcomes; productivity, quality of work life, and profit" (Cascio 2006: 6), as well as job satisfaction and commitment as mentioned earlier (Armstrong 2000a). Typically, industry SHRM links strategic planning and human resource management (HRM) in that the organisation's objectives are determined and personnel policies and practices aligned with those objectives (Tompkins 2002). Therefore, HR or personnel employees play a strategic role in formulating policies and practices to support achieving organisational objectives.

Based on an analysis of an organisation's internal and external environments and the strategic objectives, HR objectives and strategies are developed. These need to be consistent with organisational goals so they achieve vertical alignment. The policies and practices need to also be aligned across the organisation to achieve horizontal integration. The goal is to develop an integrated personnel program, with consistent interrelationships so policies and practices in one functional area do not work at cross purposes with those in other areas (Tompkins 2002; Fisher et al. 2006).

An important process to facilitate vertical and horizontal integration is strategic planning. Strategic planning is the process of setting major organisational objectives and developing comprehensive plans to achieve these and its scope covers decisions on key initiatives such as structure, strategy, and policies, including the determination of labour requirements (Nankervis et al. 1999). The time horizon can be long, middle or short range (Heneman and Judge 2003). Long range strategic planning is undertaken by

top management to set the strategic direction of a company and reflects the philosophy, goals and objectives. Middle range strategic planning involves developing programs and business plans to operationalise strategic plans for business units and departments; whereas short range strategic planning is concerned with budgeting, program scheduling, monitoring and controlling (Entrekin and Court 2001).

Thus, strategic planning is proactive as it considers both the internal and external environment and develops plans to cater for the future rather than being reactive to changes in the industry, marketplace, economy, society and technological changes (Mello 2006). An important aspect of SHRM is formulating appropriate strategies for the long and short term (Chandler 1962). Strategy can take different forms. It can be prescriptive, descriptive, static and or dynamic (Gronfeldt and Strother 2006). Strategy is usually represented by four approaches; classical, evolutionary, processual and systematic approaches (Segal-Horn 1998; Whittington 2001; Analoui 2007; Beardwell and Claydon 2007). Storey (1997) also categorises strategy as being defensive or prospective.

Whichever strategy is adopted, matching these with appropriate HR strategies, policies and practices can improve organisational performance (Miles and Snow 1978). The SHRM approach checks likely impacts of both the external and internal organisational environments against the long term goals of the organisation and adapts the human resources to meet these goals (Nankervis et al. 1999). This means HR professionals need to expand their competencies to include business, finance, strategy, and management of change processes for them to, according to Professor David

Ulrich's model, "become a partner with ... line managers in strategy execution, become a champion for employees, become an agent of continuous transformation" (Nankervis et al. 1999:24).

When integrating SHRM with the business strategy, the organisational policies and practices should align with the vision and mission statements. Linking human resources to the strategic vision is crucial because there is no use creating statements of strategic intent that have little relationship to the everyday behaviours of employees (Gratton 1994). In strategic terms the vision helps the organisation to know where it is heading and why it exists and who the customers are (Armstrong 2000a) and sets the basic directions and strategies to get there. However, having and believing in a vision is not enough it needs to be effectively communicated (Koteen 1997).

Several factors help determine and shape the strategic needs of an organisation. Top management defines the overall corporate level mission statements and target the key objectives that specify the programs and policies designed to help the organisation achieve the objectives (Bamberger and Meshoulam 2000). The mission statement should be clear and have a well-defined purpose that demonstrates the goals and scope of the organisation to employees (Whiteley 2000). Developing an appropriate strategy is not enough; ensuring successful and effective implementation is important and vision and mission statements help do this.

Knowing where the organisation is going [the vision] and knowing the organisations' objective [the mission] are important for developing the required

strategy. Strategic HRM needs to be aligned with the vision and mission as part of the organisational strategy (Kenny 2005). Hence, whilst a vision statement directs the organisation, the mission statement leads the organisation into realising set organisational objectives (Bamberger and Meshoulam 2000). The goals and objectives are important as they motivate the organisation to achieve the desired ends through the established procedures (Bratton and Gold 2007). The goals are based on the mission statement and analyses of the internal strengths and weaknesses and external opportunities and threats (Fisher et al. 2006).

Another factor influencing strategy formation is the organisations structure, as this depicts the working relationships that affect how SHRM is implemented (Millmore et al. 2007). An organisations' structure may be bureaucratic, flat or boundary-less. Bureaucratic structures are top-down, with centralised decision-making and control. This structure is effective in predictable and stable environments (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004) and in large organisations, such as public sector organisations, banks and utility companies (Millmore et al. 2007). In contrast, the flat organisation is decentralised with fewer managers and greater employee involvement in decision-making. And therefore respond better to a changing business environment (Douglas 2002). Lastly, the boundary less organisation applies to team work and operates in a joint venture type of relationship with customers, suppliers and/or competitors (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004).

The organisational structure has inherent features which influence the implementation of SHRM, and structural changes may be required to gain the full benefits of SHRM. As already mentioned, investigations have confirmed that SHRM



improves business performance. However the degree of effectiveness depends on the skill and care with which HRM strategies are implemented and applied to the firm's business problems and support for the operating and strategic initiatives (Cascio 2006). The next section reviews the elements of SHRM and how these are operationalised.

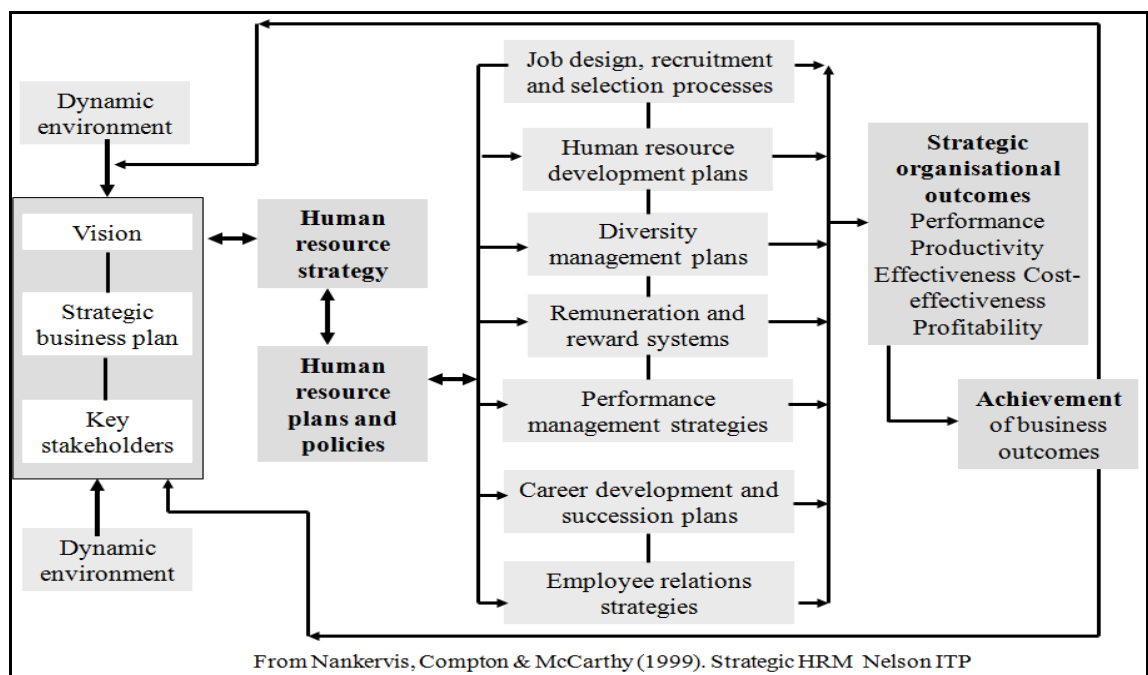
#### **2.4.1 Elements of Strategic Human Resource Management**

Several models depicting strategic human resource management (SHRM) have been suggested by scholars. One example is the Michigan Business School (Fombrun et al. 1984) model which identified selection, appraisal, development [training] and rewards as the key elements of HR. This model further assumes a workplace is unitaristic (Beardwell and Clark 2007) and aligns to the 'hard' HRM theory. The model postulates that human resources are to be exploited to the maximum benefit of the organisation (Analoui 2007). This approach combines the four traditional functions (recruitment and selection, appraisal, compensation and development) with performance to form the SHRM-Cycle (Fischer and Weitbrecht 1995) and suggests that strategic integration of these elements will lead to improved performance (Pfeffer 1994; Lundy and Cowling 1996). A proper alignment of these elements will have the potential to meet specific performance goals of the organisation (Fombrun et al. 1984).

Critics of the Michigan model claim it is inhuman as employees have no say in decisions and power is in the hands of managers. The Harvard model differs by recognising not only the presence of different stakeholders, such as employees, government and the community, but that their interests differ from the organisation (Beer, Spector, Lawrence, Mills and Walton 1984). The Harvard model suggests the

human resource strategies need to recognise and reflect these interests and so emphasises the soft side of HRM (Beardwell and Clark 2007). Guest (1989) proposes another model that incorporates the concepts of strategic integration, high commitment, high quality and flexibility in an attempt to ensure a balance between hard and soft HRM.

Figure 2.1: A Strategic Model of Human Resource Management



A model that shows how SHRM is typically operationalised in industry is shown in Figure 2.1. This model views SHRM as a process that links strategic planning and human resource management by determining vision-related objectives and aligning human resource (HR) policies and practices with the objectives. Nankervis, Compton and McCarthy (1999) identify the major themes of SHRM in this model as follows:

- Organisations need to be aware of and respond to the characteristics of their dynamic external environments (e.g. global, national, industry)
- HR specialists need business acumen to contribute to the strategic business plan

of the organisation

- Human resource strategies linked with identified business requirements need to drive specific human resource plans and policies
- The HR plans and policies guide the development and refinement of all HR functions and these practices need to be integrated with each other and aligned to the HR strategies and plans
- The effectiveness of the HR functions are reflected in desired strategic organisational goals that are expressed in such outcomes as performance, productivity, cost effectiveness and/or profitability
- The process has a long-term outlook and is cyclical with sufficient flexibility to allow changes in human resource strategy in response to changes in organisational strategies and/or the dynamic organisational environments.

Figure 2.1 shows that HR needs to operate at three levels; the strategic level (involvement in corporate and human resource planning), the operational level (involvement in developing action plans to meet present labour needs) and the functional level (involvement in activities that ensure employees are in the right place at the right time and for the right cost). The functional areas include human resource policy, human resource planning, human resource information systems, job design and evaluation, recruitment and selection, diversity management, career management, learning and development, appraisal and performance management, remuneration, industrial relations and occupational health and safety (Nankervis et al. 1999).

From the foregoing, the three main elements of SHRM can be identified as HR strategies, HR planning and HR functions. The HR functions comprise sub-elements, examples of which include recruitment and selection, learning and development, diversity, reward, performance management, employee relations. These elements are described below.

#### **2.4.1.1 Human resource strategies**

The human resource (HR) strategy is the prioritisation that aligns the human resources policies, and programs with the strategic business plan (Cascio 2006). The SHRM approach involves evaluating the likely impacts on the organisation of both the external and internal environments, the organisation's long-term goals, and the ways in which HRM strategy will help adapt human resources to meet these goals. Therefore SHRM requires long term strategies which consider possible societal, industrial relations, economic, legislative, global or technological changes, or changes in business directions, to achieve the most suitable alignment or 'fit' with the business goals. This implies that the SHRM strategy will differ across organisations (Nankervis et al. 1999).

The core requirement of SHRM is the alignment of personnel policies and practices with the organisation's strategic objectives. This includes helping the organisation adapt to changes in the external or internal environments; for example, what actions can HR take in response to external events such as tight labour markets, changing workforce demographics, or changes in the organisational systems and culture. Alignment also entails building human capacity to support strategic initiatives – what steps need to be taken to meet forecast future staffing needs and demands; changing an organisational culture to reflect different values that require different

behaviors like adopting a ‘customer-service’ orientation and preparing employees for such changes. Alignment to ‘business strategy’ involves the selection and implementation of a specific business strategy for success. Examples include being ‘an employer of choice’ to gain a competitive advantage, or being ‘a high commitment’ organisation to encourage employee empowerment (Tompkins 2002).

After identifying the type of alignment, the next step involves implementing appropriate human resource strategies. Although not exhaustive, Tompkins (2002) identifies six categories of human resource strategy. These are a cost containment strategy (strategies for minimising labor costs), a performance management strategy (strategies for productivity related or performance-based rewards) and an involvement strategy (strategies for empowering employees). Another is a retention strategy (strategies for providing the conditions for retaining human resources, including generous benefit packages, competitive pay, positive work environment, and other retention or family-friendly policies such as flextime and day care assistance). The final two are an Investment Strategy (strategies for investing in training and development) and Cohesion Strategy (strategies for establishing a sense job of community and social bonds). These various strategies can be applied individually or in combination, depending on situational factors, such as the industry type and the business priorities. The remaining elements deal with how the HR strategies are translated into action.

#### **2.4.1.2 Human resource planning**

Human resource planning (HRP) is the ‘bridge’ that links HR strategies and functions in order to convert the strategies into real actions. Thus, HRP incorporates relevant HR strategies that are operationalised through how efficient and effective HR functions met

the organisational objectives by effectively utilising human resources. The first step is to take into account the changing circumstances within and outside the organisation. The HRP process considers long, medium and short term HR strategies and modifies functions, such as recruitment, training, development, career management and employee separation, to match employee demand and supply forecasts so relevant objectives can be met (Nankervis et al. 1999).

Human resource planning or strategic staffing, thus involves identifying and addressing staffing implications of their business strategies showing the long term outlook as well as meeting short term needs (Bechet 2008). To be effective, HRP should cover the processes of environmental scanning, labour analysis, supply analysis, gap analysis, action programming and evaluation (Bernardin 2007). To be strategic, HR planning has to link business goals through the relevant HR strategies. In this way, organisational goals and objectives link people and their training, motivation, rewards and employee relations to successfully achieve corporate objectives (Armstrong 2000b).

Strategic HR planning maps out strategies about the type of employees required for the future and the essential skills and training needed to enable the organisation achieve set goals. There are five major objectives of HR planning; the first is to prevent overstaffing and understaffing. The second to employ the right type of people with the right skills in the right place, the third is the organisations responsiveness to changes in the environment, the fourth is to provide direction and coherence for all human resource activities and systems and the last is to unite the perspectives of line and staff managers (Mello 2006). These specific objectives link with the specific HR strategies they address

to make them relevant. Once approved, the plans are implemented through the HR functions they represent.

#### **2.4.1.3 Human resource functions**

Over the past thirty years, the HR role has broadened from being a generalist administrator to being the coordinator and implementer of the HR functions and policies (Fisher et al. 2006). The human resources functions can be grouped into the five major areas of staffing, retention, development, adjustment, and managing change to achieve organisational goals. Line and HR managers have shared responsibilities for ensuring success. Typically, HR provides the technical expertise whilst line managers use this expertise to manage people effectively (Cascio 2006). These activities are described below.

Staffing involves identifying work requirements, determining number / skills needed for the job, and filling the positions through recruitment, selection and / or promotion. Retention includes employee rewards, workplace relations to ensure harmonious employee/manager relationships as well as maintaining safe and healthy workplace. Development covers the means to preserve and improve employee competences. Adjustment comprises activities for maintaining compliance with HR policies and managing change enhances the organisation's ability to cope with changes in its external and internal environments (Cascio 2006).

These HR functions centre around the human resource elements of information system, job design and evaluation, recruitment and selection, diversity management,

career management, learning and development, appraisal and performance management, remuneration, industrial relations, occupational health and safety (Nankervis et al. 1999; Armstrong 2006). The functions are shared by the HR department and line managers. For example, in the area of retention, line managers are responsible for treating employees fairly, resolving conflicts, promoting teamwork and providing pay increases, whilst the HR managers have responsibility for devising the compensation system (Cascio 2006).

Establishing a HR department and employing HR professionals is thus very important for performing these functions effectively. The HR professional seeks to carefully hire, reward, train and promote only the employees that fit well with the culture and goals of the organisation (Bowen 2002), whereas the reality is line managers are often more preoccupied with productivity and operational matters. The HR department is responsible for implementing the HR functions, unless of course it is a very small sized organisation where numbers sometimes don't substantiate a dedicated HR department (Analoui 2007; Noe et al. 2007) . Some argue that the degree of success SHRM has in creating competitive advantage through the human resources is linked to the existence and professionalism of the HR department (Galang 2002).

However, others dispute the importance of the HR department's role in facilitating competitive advantage (Harris, Brewster and Sparrow 2003) as the role can either be done by others or outsourced. Similarly, Analoui (2007) argues the HR influence on corporate strategy remains debatable. Despite this dilemma, the HR department is a 'potential resource center' and most corporatised organisations have



incorporated it in their organisations; the reality is that an outsider does not understand the organisation as well as somebody who works within it and knows and understands its people, purpose and systems.

The HR activities thus include advising and counseling on internal issues and external trends, performing services such as selection and recruitment, training, policy modification, formulation and implementation and employee advocacy as complaints of employees are passed on to the relevant managers (Bohlander and Snell 2007). Other areas include acting as the agent of change (Ulrich 1997; Analoui 2007) and the ability to manage employee diversity. Diversity management has assumed a strategic proportion (Fisher et al. 2006) and offers a competitive advantage for the organisation through the power to promote employee commitment and loyalty, reduction in employee turnover and improved performance (Keiser 2002).

To sum up the responsibilities of the HR department / HR staff include strategic, operational and functional roles, rather than just the specialist HR functions (Sisson and Storey 2000). HR professionals therefore need to be competent in managing the HR functions and also need to acquire business competencies in financial matters, strategy and know how to manage change processes (Nankervis et al. 1999). The HR manager is thus required to demonstrate evidence of skills and qualities in human relations, decision-making, leadership and HR technical skills (Noe et al. 2007). The next section describes the strategic aspects of the human resource management functions.

**Strategic recruitment and selection:** Recruitment seeks and attracts potential applicants to fill advertised, vacant or newly created positions in the organisation, whilst selection aims to select the best candidate with the required knowledge, ability, skill and other characteristics needed to deliver successful performance on the job (Gronfeldt and Strother 2006). But moving from the traditional perspective of selection and recruitment to a strategic one focuses not only on appointing the right recruits (Sisson and Storey 2000) but also pursues wider strategic goals in the long term (Millmore 2003). Hence, the essence of strategic recruitment and selection is to ensure that both current and future strategic needs are met so the organisation can adapt to its internal and external environments.

Another feature of strategic recruitment and selection is to align and integrate this function with the strategic processes, mission statement and values so these match the attributes demonstrated by potential employees. Having a good fit between the personal attributes of the employees and the organisation's goals lays the foundation for success in the long term (Millmore and Baker 1996). This strategic recruitment and selection criterion based on the employee attribute is referred to as person-organisation (P - O) fit. According to Higgins (2002), P - O is defined as "the compatibility between specific individual attributes and comparable organisational attributes" (p233). The P-O matches individual values and organisational values, the individual personality traits with the organisational culture and compares the individual and organisational characteristics.

A good fit with the P – O selection model supports higher employee satisfaction and commitment and lower work related stress; although this is often difficult to

implement in extremely tight labour conditions (Higgins 2002). According to Cascio (2006), “a close fit between individual strengths and interests and organisational and job characteristics almost guarantees a happy marriage” (p224). Therefore, from a strategic perspective, the selection processes should ensure that the candidates have a good fit with the organisation’s culture and strategic direction (Nankervis et al. 1999).

In practice, strategic recruitment and selection are realised through an ‘exchange or processual’ method advocated by Newell (2005). This approach acknowledges the subjectivity in recruitment and selection and helps the individual and the organisation negotiate a strategically compatible fit through interaction. The approach is designed to help avoid recruiting candidates who will display limited commitment to the organisation when they discover that their expectations about the job and the organisation were unrealistic (Newell 2005). Therefore, to attract and retain teachers, schools need to implement strategic recruitment and selection processes so they employ teachers whose personal characteristics, strengths and interests closely fit the job or school’s culture, characteristics, values and long term strategic goals.

**Strategic training and development:** Training and development involves planned programs designed to positively change current knowledge, skills, attitudes and/or social behaviours to improve future performance at the individual, group or organisational levels. To be strategic and effective, it should have top management commitment, link to business strategy (Cascio 2006) and be horizontally integrated with other HRM functions (Millmore et al. 2007). Strategic training and development is not a one-stop process; it begins with induction, training and development and continues throughout employment with the organisation. The aim is to create and implement a

career development program that benefits both the organisation and the individual (Nankervis et al. 1999).

Strategic human resource development (SHRD) introduces processes that either eliminate, modify, direct and guide individual and team behaviors so they are equipped with the required skills, knowledge and competencies (Walton 1999). Such goals aid continuous learning and would in the long term eliminate staleness, boredom, burn-out and/or ineffectiveness (Gronfeldt and Strother 2006). Strategic HRD aims to ensure that not only the requisite skills, knowledge, and abilities are included, but that individual experience, attitudes and values are utilised to promote effective performance for the present and future critical operating tasks [COTs] and strategic management tasks [SMATs] (Kiggundu 1993; Bernardin 2007; Noe et al. 2007). Developing employees strategically requires that development and training are proactive [opportunistic and maintain sustainable competitive edge] rather than reactive [response to meeting specific problems in the job] (Analoui 2007).

From the school perspective staff development needs to be a continuous or ongoing process that offers teachers up to date skills that are useful both in and outside of the classroom (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Dynamic Professional Development (PD) is central to the teacher's performance and development cycle and contributes to better performance (Ingarvarson and Chadbourne 1994). This helps both the individual and the school meet their objectives. It also provides greater motivation for employees and helps the organisation respond to changes and is likely to reduce turnover (Noe et al. 2007) .

**Strategic appraisal and performance management:** The appraisal system refers to the tools used to evaluate how the employees and the organisation have performed against the overall objectives and goals of the organisation (Analoui 2007). Employee appraisal needs to be ongoing, on a daily basis if necessary and usually culminates in an annual performance review. The process can be formal or informal, however practices should directly match the nature of the organisation (Bunting 2005). The results of appraisal benefit both the employee and organisation. The process aims to improve individual's efficiency and effectiveness by providing a feedback loop and the organisation can utilise the results for the entire range of HRM activities (Bohlander and Snell 2007) such as, decisions on employee's working conditions, promotions, termination and rewards (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004). Appraisal cannot stand-alone and needs to be integrated into a performance management scheme for it to be useful and strategic.

Studies show that organisations with strong performance management systems are more likely to outperform their competitors on financial and nonfinancial measures, such as, customer satisfaction, employee retention and quality of products or services. Appraisal is only part of the performance management system and need to be incorporated as one of three elements that focus on improving employee performance to benefit both the organisation and employee (Nankervis et al. 1999; Cascio 2006). The three elements are defining performance through objective setting, facilitating performance by providing needed resources to realise the objectives and encouraging performance through timely rewards. Performance management is not only limited to outcomes and targets, but includes the strategic competencies employees need (Fisher 2005). Aligning the appraisal and performance management practices with the

organisations objectives is what makes it strategic.

Strategic appraisal and performance management ensure that the necessary entitlements such as pay increases or bonuses are paid out to the individual, based on the level of individual and organisational achievement. However, if gaps or weaknesses are identified, individual employees should be given the necessary training and development to bring about corrective action and facilitate achieving the set targets for the future (Bunting 2005). Hence, the process becomes the key to employee development and improved employee performance (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004).

A school based strategic appraisal and performance management process should be appropriate for the school environment, as a process that returns constructive feedback on the individual performance it should motivate the employee. The measurement of teachers' performance has always been an issue. Some schools link teachers' performance and reward with students' achievements, but the limitation is that teachers will focus only on students' ratings rather than the total goal of education (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004). Implementing strategic appraisal and performance management has the potential to identify and retain good quality teachers and to transform lower performers to better performers. Individual goals should be specific, measurable, agreed by both the employee and the employer, be realistic and should be time bound (Bunting 2005). The scope could include behaviour-based outcomes (Schuster 1980) which define performance in the following ways:

- observable physical actions
- objective based outcomes in terms of results achieved and
- judgment based outcomes in terms of the opinions of knowledgeable observers.

**Strategic rewards:** Reward systems are designed to bridge the gap between organisational objectives and individual expectations and aim to attract, retain and motivate the workforce. Organisations are under an obligation to reward and compensate their employees with pay (Milkovich and Newman 1986; Heneman and Judge 2003). Strategic reward is defined as “*the deliberate utilisation of the pay system as an essential integrating mechanism through which the efforts of various sub-units and individuals are directed toward the achievement of an organisation’s strategic objective*” (Go`mez-Mejia and Balkin 1992: 32).

A reward system is what an employer offers in exchange for employee contributions. The compensation could take the form of financial rewards [extrinsic] for example direct payments such as salaries, benefits and non-financial rewards [intrinsic] which include recognition, job security (Heneman and Judge 2003; Armstrong and Murlis 2004). The strategic objectives of remuneration are to reward past performance, remain competitive in the labour market, motivate future performance, attract and retain good staff and reduce staff turnover (Nankervis et al. 1999; Leopold, Harris and Watson 2005; Cascio 2006). Although two distinct forms of reward exist, the organisation focuses on using both forms of reward. Nevertheless, the extent of this may be questionable. For the school sector, a reward system that satisfies both extrinsic and intrinsic needs of the teacher is most likely to attract and retain the teacher. Such combined reward scheme will help address the range of reasons why teachers leave the profession as outlined in subsection 2.2.3.2. Having seen the elements of SHRM and how they are operationalised, the next section reviews the evidence of its adoption within the context of the contingency theory.

### **2.4.2 Universal Approach and Contingency Theory**

Evidence shows that many organisations have successfully deployed SHRM. For example, many private companies in manufacturing, IT, Service-providing companies, amongst others have enjoyed the benefits of applying SHRM (Storey 1995; Lundy and Cowling 1996). Findings from a study of innovative small to medium enterprises (SMEs) in Australia support that the use of SHRM practices, with ongoing investment in continuous learning, training and retraining and strategic use of rewards (Mathews 2002) pays dividends for the organisations. According to Brown (2000), evidence from private and public sector organisations suggests that human resource is involved and plays a strategic role in the quality process of such organisations. He stated that the “role of human resource management in facilitating the development and maintenance of a quality culture can be significant” (Brown 2000: 34), and this manifests in good business outcomes.

A survey amongst 334 organisations of changes to human resource practices in Australia confirmed the existence of the SHRM approaches in Australian organisations. The survey found that the role of the HR department has changed markedly as Human Resources professionals now integrate HR strategy and corporate strategy. Furthermore, the role of trade unions has declined, bargain on employment conditions and wages has shifted to the enterprise level, organisations introducing techniques to ensure direct communication with employees, growth in performance pay schemes, flexible employment practices, training, performance appraisal and broader job structures (Kramar 1999).



Although Lansbury (2003) argues that the growth of SHRM amongst Australian organisations is well documented, his opinion is not unanimous. For instance, the survey of a sample (119 responses out of 800) of chief executive officers of Australian SMEs found that the result of SHRM uptake was not as encouraging as earlier thought, but there were signs of change to the SHRM models (Nankervis, Compton and Savery 2002). In their empirical and conceptual studies of SHRM practices in Australia, Michelson and Kramar (2003) identified that practices are uneven and large multinational organisations are further ahead of small or medium sized firms in SHRM take-up.

The emerging discussions suggest that organisation's take a contingency view when adopting SHRM and take into account the organisation type, the strategies in place and the operating environment (Schuler and Jackson 2002). Clearly, what is good for one organisation may not be good for another, so organisations should choose systems and strategies that best fit their specific situations (Kydd and Oppenheim 1990; Sisson and Storey 2000; Anthony, Kacmar and Perrewè 2002). Significant differences between organisations and their operating environment determine the nature of SHRM operations.

Despite the success of SHRM in other industries, the public sector has not fully adopted the change made in the private sector (Fisher and Dowling 1999). This need for reflexivity (a Learning Organisation concept that means the organisation seeks, acts on and learns from feedback) possibly explains why the public sector, in contrast to the private sector, has been slower in the up-take of an industry approach to SHRM. This is particularly relevant because of the potential positive contributions of SHRM to the

school sector. The next section examines how a model of SHRM can be developed for schools.

## **2.5 Adopting Strategic Human Resource Management in Schools**

The critical role teachers play in helping schools realise their outcomes and the teacher shortage issues affecting schools in Western Australia have been explained. This section argues that the SHRM model that has been a successful model for assisting other industries to achieve strategic objectives and business outcomes can equally benefit schools. Given the importance of teachers, the challenge is for schools to attract and retain the right number and quality of teachers needed to achieve their objectives.

Solving the problem of teacher shortage is a key success area for schools in WA, but how can SHRM be of help? Out of the six HR strategies identified in sub-section 2.4.1.1, the retention strategy provides conditions for retaining teachers, yet other strategies, such as, an involvement, investment and cohesion strategies are also needed. These strategies can drive appropriate actions to enhance the attraction and retention of teachers through the instrumentality of each relevant HR function, under the framework of a school based model of SHRM. Such a model would need to be supported by programs tailored to the unique characteristics, vision and objectives of schools and in line with the contingency theory and would have a broader application to other education systems.

Given that the majority of schools are part of the public sector and all fall under the governance of this sector, the role of SHRM in the public sector is examined.

Western Australian schools, whether private or public, fall under the governance of public sector educational agencies. This means that the policies and procedures of the education department directly govern the public schools and indirectly govern the privately owned and self-supporting schools (Foster 1987; CLMR 2000; Payne 2001). Below discusses the application of SHRM in the public sector schools.

### **2.5.1 Strategic Human Resource Management in the Public Sector**

Some observers claim that an industry-type strategic approach to HRM is not necessarily appropriate to the public sector. This is because most government agencies rarely operate in competitive markets or they function within large systems of authority and do not have the same level of autonomy as private industries (Tompkins 2002). Therefore, SHRM implementation needs to be viewed differently from the practices in private organisations.

Most public sector organisations are knowledge intensive and rely on the intellectual capital of their workers (instead of products) for their competitive advantage, which suggests these workers need to be managed strategically. Being able to determine the essential knowledge, skills, and abilities such public-sector workers require and developing their capacities is would enable the public sector respond to opportunities and threats, and at the same time foster employee commitment, so intellectual capital is not lost to other employers (Tompkins 2002). This suggests the need to broaden the meaning of SHRM in the public sector instead of limiting it to strict business driven goals such as profitability and hard targets as entrenched in the private organisations.

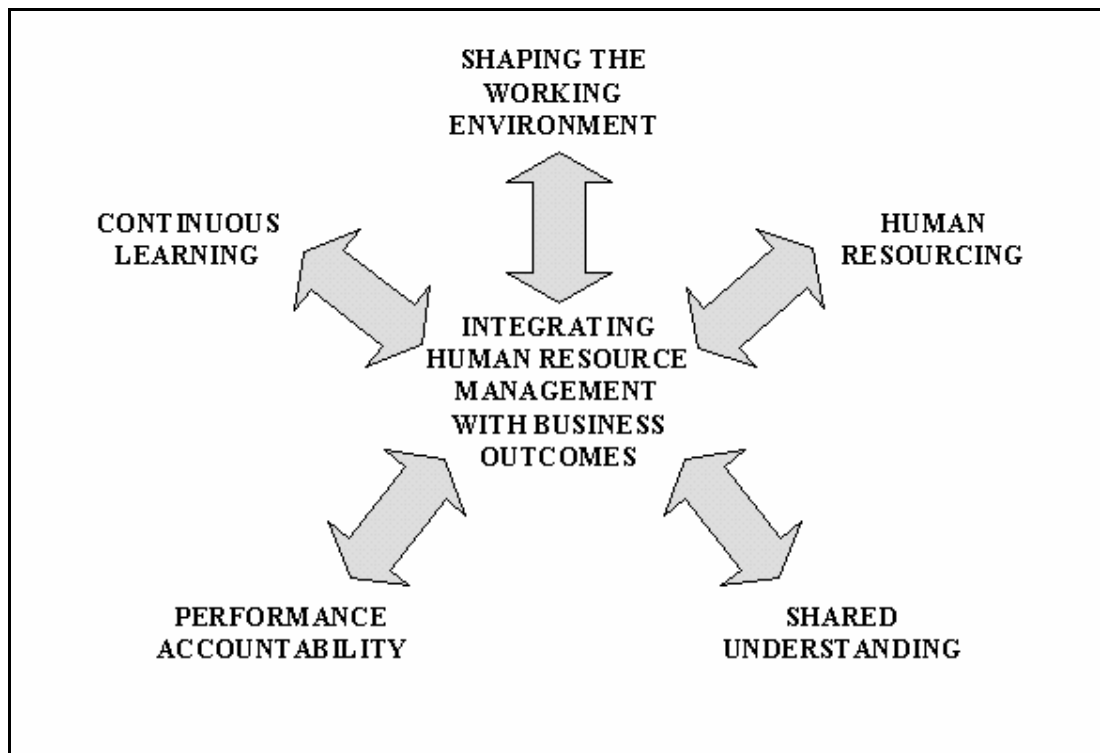
The SHRM role “*in addition to helping the organisation implement strategic initiatives, also carries out an integrated personnel program for enhancing organisational performance by acquiring, developing and managing human resources strategically*” (Tompkins 2002: 106). A cost-containment HR strategy is used when organisations emphasise hard business targets. For public sector agencies that rely on their human capital, the organisational objective focuses on how to manage this intellectual capital or the people, rather than hard targets. These public sector agencies seem to rely on a combination of the investment, involvement, and retention strategies for attracting, developing, and retaining human resources that will be required to meet knowledge intensive services in an ever changing business environment (Tompkins 2002).

The importance of a strategic approach to HRM has been recognised in government agencies across Australia and WA (Teo 2000). This move has been backed up by the Australian public sector reforms of the 1980s and 1990s driven by the need for a more cost effective and efficient public sector which had seen the public sector “cloning managerial practices from the private sector” (Brown, Waterhouse and Flynn 2003: 2). The public sector thus moved to a more entrepreneurial and performance based systems including privatisation and corporatisation of some public sector agencies (Brown and Waterhouse 2006).

The WA Public Sector Management Office has jointly with HR industry and academic experts developed a framework for implementing SHRM within the State’s Public Sector Agencies. The framework is intended to assist agencies integrate the

different human resource elements with their business strategy and outlines the practical implications of providing a holistic and business driven SHRM (DPC 2001). Five elements of this SHRM framework that align with the elements of SHRM outlined in section 2.4.1 include, shaping the working environment, human resources, shared understanding, performance accountability and continuous learning (DPC 2001) as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: WA Public Sector SHRM Framework



The meaning of each of the key points is summarised as follows:

***Integrating human resource management with business outcomes:***

- *Expected business outcomes are determined and communicated to all employees.*
- *Strategic and operational business planning addresses HR issues.*
- *Business strategy is supported by effective HR information systems.*
- *Organisational structure and profile is aligned with business demands.*

***Shaping the working environment:***

- *Conditions of employment are responsive to organisational and employee needs.*

- *Policy and guidelines promote ethical conduct.*
- *Organisational culture and accountability mechanisms exist for the achievement of diversity/respect.*

***Human resourcing:***

- *Strategic and operational business planning determine priorities for HR planning.*
- *Flexible resourcing options are effectively utilised to ensure that the organisation possesses the skills and competencies necessary to meet business demands.*
- *Bias free employee recruitment, selection and induction processes are consistently deployed throughout the organisation.*

***Shared understanding:***

- *Expected business outcomes are determined and communicated to all employees.*
- *Employees are actively involved in strategic and operational business planning.*
- *Communication strategies take account of the different perspectives and levels of understanding within the organisation.*
- *Employees are regularly informed of progress towards the achievement of business outcomes.*

***Performance accountability:***

- *Performance management processes are linked to the achievement of business outcomes as well as individual performance and development needs.*
- *Managers are responsible for coaching and guiding employees as part of performance management processes.*
- *Employees regularly receive feedback from managers and are encouraged to reflect on their contribution to the organisation.*
- *Performance management processes for are consistently deployed throughout the organisation and records are kept so that decisions can be reviewed during appraisal for reward.*

***Continuous learning:***

- *A strategic HR plan incorporates HR development needs and outlines development activities based on business priorities.*
- *Core competencies are identified and skills gaps are systematically addressed.*
- *Performance indicators measure the success of development activities in improving service delivery and meeting business outcomes.*

Various public sector agencies have adopted SHRM type practices and even though the WA Department of Education and Training has a SHRM policy, it is unclear how effectively it is devolved and being practiced at the school level. As Teo (2000) highlighted “there is need to establish whether there is any difference in the extent of SHRM in public sector organisations that are providers of service e.g. health and education” (p12). Specifically for school, thus far there is little documented evidence of how human resource management practices function in an integrated and strategic manner for teachers, when compared to the practice of individual HR functions (Smylie

et al. 2004).

Some studies in America found that “*school districts that were successful in their reform efforts employed integrated systems of teacher recruitment and professional development that were strategically tied to the districts’ goals for improving teaching and learning*” (Smylie et al. 2004: 52). Other case studies from American schools (Louis and Miles 1990; Elmore, Peterson and McCarthy 1996) also confirm that adopting comprehensive and strategic human resource management systems was more effective in achieving learning outcomes. However, as Smylie and colleagues (2004) pointed out, the effectiveness varied from school to school.

Discussing the reformation in American public schools, evidence found suggest that major improvements can be accomplished by recruiting, rewarding, and retaining good people. Furthermore, some schools and districts were systematically better at such improvements and there was evidence of common strategic elements in the way they managed themselves. These school organisations relied on performance accountability, greater clarity of purpose, a greater looseness and delegation of specific decisions to the school level, and a common culture of values to shape collective action, rather than bureaucratic rules and controls (Elmore 2000).

These findings are indicative of a SHRM approach in action, however, as already mentioned, there are a number of tensions and dilemmas specific to the school environment that need to be resolved before strategic teacher workforce management can be fully entrenched (Smylie et al. 2004). To close, an important feature of SHRM

in the public sector is the need for appropriate strategies to attract and retain human resources. Given the current concerns about teacher shortages, it becomes quite compelling to propose a school model of SHRM in the education sector.

### **2.5.2 School Model of Strategic Human Resource Management**

A model of SHRM needs to be designed and tailored to the unique characteristics, vision and objectives of schools in line with contingency theory. According to Nankervis et al (1999), SHRM theories cannot be separated from the socio-economic, political and industrial relations climates in which they operate, hence the need for practitioners to decide on the applicability of SHRM within their own industries. As previously discussed, the different stakeholders (including trade unions) have different interests and teachers, with their intellectual capital, are clearly one of the most important contributors.

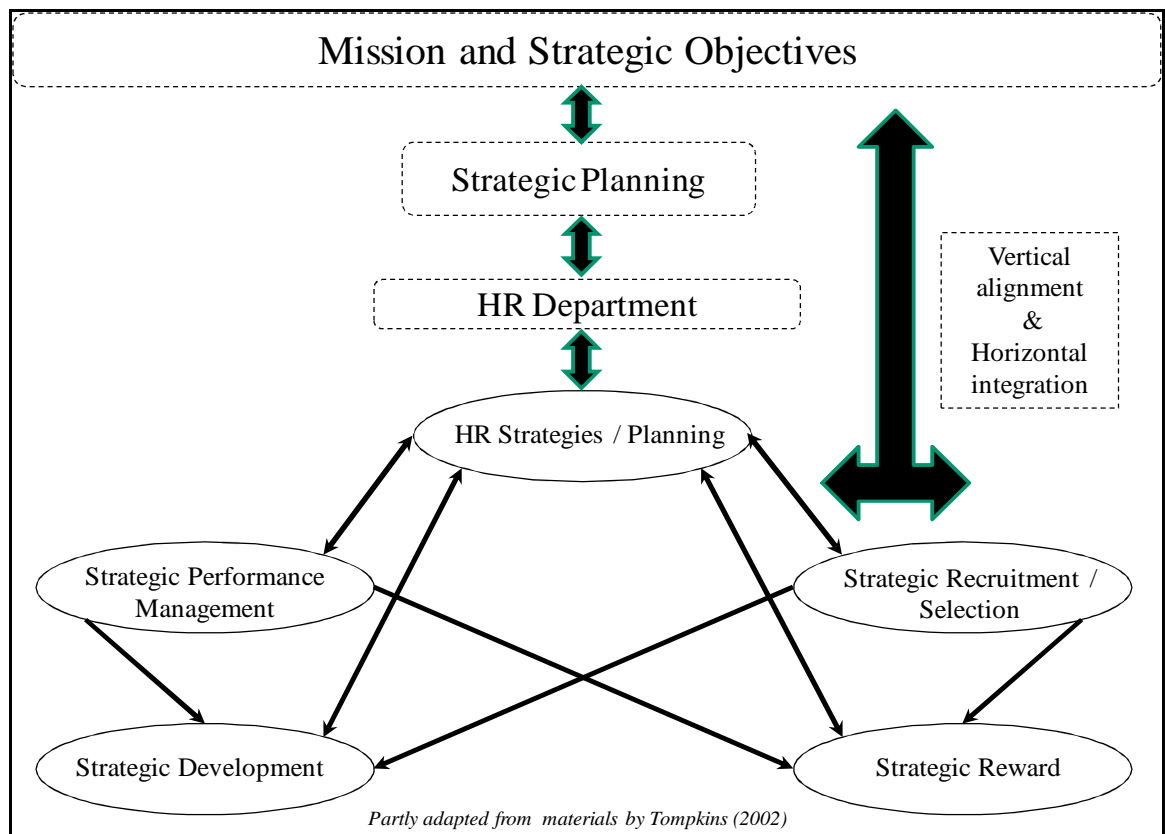
Developing a framework of SHRM strategies and processes that align with the school's vision and objectives should help in the attraction and retention of teachers. Therefore, the key features of a school-based model of SHRM should include:

- A pluralistic approach that recognises the shared industrial objectives.
- A soft approach that emphasises the involvement of employees through consultation, empowerment, commitment and communication.
- HR strategies focused on attracting, developing, and retaining critical human resources needed to realise school outcomes.



According to Tompkins (2002) there are four key requirements for SHRM in public sector type organisations. These include, an established strategic planning process, a statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives, a dedicated HR department where HR staff are involved in linking personnel-related functions to strategic objectives and finally, vertically aligned activities and horizontally integrated personnel policies and practices. These requirements form the framework for a school model of SHRM, as shown in Figure 2.3 and are described below.

Figure 2.3: Proposed School Model of Strategic Human Resource Management



**An established strategic planning process:** Strategic planning proactively formulates actions to shape and guide the organisation and considers objectives and future changes to gain maximum competitive advantage (Mello 2006; Analoui 2007). The strategic

planning process provides a clear sense of direction to staff and is therefore best as a short and simple process (Tompkins 2002). Usually, top management undertakes the strategic plan and this should involve the Human Resources staff. Plans can be for the short term [one year], medium term [one to three years] or longer term [three years and more] (Heneman and Judge 2003).

**Clear mission and strategic objectives:** A clearly articulated mission statement and strategic objectives, helps to define the purpose of an organisation and communicate the main goals (Bamberger and Meshoulam 2000). Whether written or unwritten, clear goals help clarify the desired results, and appropriate performance indicators can be set against these to cover every aspect of the business including emerging concerns (Tompkins 2002). Closely linked, is the organisation's vision, which helps determine where an organisation is heading. The vision gives a clear direction, whereas the mission statement declares the purpose of existence, however to be effective these must be communicated to all stakeholders (Koteen 1997).

**A dedicated HR department:** Having dedicated human resources staff with the skills and knowledge to implement strategies that fit well with the vision and mission of the organisation is important. Without sufficient resources to operate strategically, HR will be unable to act strategically and are more likely to serve a personnel, payroll or record keeping function. Cascio (2006) stresses that staffing, retention, development, adjustment and managing change all need integrating. Human resources staff can only align the human capacity to support strategic initiatives if they are involved in the strategic planning process (Milcovich and Boudreau 1991; Tompkins 2002).

**Need to integrate and align human resource practices with the organisational objectives:** The HR activities need to fit both vertically and horizontally. Vertical alignment describes the match between HR practices and overall business strategy, whereas horizontal fit is the consistent and integrated interrelationship that exists across HR activities (Fisher et al. 2006; Beardwell 2007). A good horizontal fit means that policies and practices in one functional area do not work at cross-purposes with those in other areas, nor would they have elements that contradict each other. Aligned policies and practices match the organisation's mission and strategic objectives. For example, performance management is linked to individual rewards and development.

### **2.5.3 Strategic Human Resource Management Strategies to Build a Steady Teacher Workforce**

*The most crucial factor in ensuring an adequate supply of teachers for the future will be to retain and support as many of those teachers currently employed as possible". "HRM must, on a continuous basis, attract, retain, utilise and develop human resources... to compete and survive... find ways to perform this core function while coping with the challenges posed by the ever-changing organisational environment" (Diepen et al. 2006:79).*

Building a steady teacher workforce involves implementing strategies and actions that attract and retain the required quantity and quality of teachers. According to Tompkins (2002), government agencies that also rely on the intellectual capital of workers, are utilising a combination of investment, involvement, and retention strategies to achieve the goal of attracting and retaining employees. These strategies are dependent on the situational factors related to the work type of the employees. For example, Chew (2004) identified these HR factors; selective selection, challenging employment assignments and opportunities, training and development, reward recognition of employees and

equity in compensation, in this order of importance in her study on retention of core employees in Australian organisations. In the order of importance, organisational factors for improving retention were ranked from leadership, company policies and culture, communication and consultation, effective integration or working relationships, satisfying work environment (Chew 2004). Although the underlying factors that motivate people to go into or leave teaching have been identified, the degree of importance of each needs to be understood before effective improvement strategies can be recommended.

Tompkins (2002) suggests attraction and retention can be improved through a combination of investment, involvement, retention and cohesion HR strategies. The investment strategy could involve training and development strategies to improve personal and organisational competence. The involvement strategy could cover actions that empower teachers with ownership, work autonomy and responsibility so that they feel motivated and committed to contribute to achieving the education goals. Retention strategy could entail providing work conditions such as generous benefit packages and competitive pay, a positive work environment, and of family-friendly policies such as flextime and day care assistance to boost satisfaction.

Cascio (2006) argues such strategies should include rewards, ensuring harmonious working relationships and maintaining a safe, healthy work environment. A cohesion strategy could include strategies that build a strong sense of community and social bonds as well as fostering open, trusting relationships within the school environment. If these strategies are implemented through the relevant human resource functions of recruitment, selection, performance appraisal and management, rewards

and development, and effectively aligned to the school's goals, they should lead to improved attraction and retention of teachers. Employee retention is enhanced through a range of functions such as pay, reward, performance, commitment and team building (Armstrong and Spellman 1993) or by improving employee communication, learning opportunities, selection techniques, work-life balance, increasing pay, revising the way staff are rewarded so their efforts are better recognised (Beardwell 2007). The remaining part of this section outlines strategies that could help build a teacher workforce.

Schools should be willing to implement strategic recruitment and selection to help them employ teachers whose personal characteristics, strengths and interests closely fit the job and/or school's culture, characteristics, values and long term strategic goals. They also need to be proactive with their training and development and develop employees strategically, rather than merely respond to specific problems (Analoui 2007). A school's strategic appraisal and performance management process should be appropriate for the school environment. Measuring teachers' performance has long been an issue and requires some rethinking. Any effective performance management system should include behavioural outcomes, observable physical actions, and objective based outcomes. This needs to be linked to a reward system that satisfies both the extrinsic and intrinsic needs of the teacher. Whatever type of compensation is employed, strategic application should align employee rewards with the organisation's objectives.

Another important aspect of teacher compensation is the need to improve the salary scheme. Improved salaries may entice ex-teachers back to the schools and others into the profession (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Bonuses and performance loading

strategies could play a critical role in keeping teachers in the profession (Webster et al. 2004) and HR professionals can help identify pay strategies as well as pay levels which either match or are better than the industry average (Noe et al. 2007). To raise the status of the teaching profession in society and encourage graduates to go into teaching, the Business Council of Australia (BCA) at the 2008 Australia's 2020 Summit, had proposed removing the flat salary scale of teachers and doubling their pay, under a national system of accreditation (Ferrari 2008).

Employees who demonstrate skills that are rare and distinct from their competitors invariably give an organisation a competitive edge and such employees need to be rewarded. Successfully deployed strategic human resource management promotes the success, continuity and competitive advantages gained through people (Analoui 2007). Competitive advantage can be measured in the value employees create, or the rarity or difficulty of imitating their skills or performance (Barney and Wright 1998; Bohlander and Snell 2007).

Pay strategies for teachers therefore need to be right as remuneration is a crucial factor affecting the retention of teachers (Ross and Hutchings 2003). Strategies for assessing individual teacher's performance and developing appropriate reward strategies to recognise individual contributions and efforts could substantially reduce the attrition rate. One of the issues here is that teachers' performance is assessed by school administrators and is often linked to students performance, (Webster et al. 2004), which may be affected by many things, such as their socio-economic environment, intellectual capacity, learning style and interest in the subject matter.

Many teachers oppose the idea of linking annual increases in salary with students' achievement and classroom performance. However, it is a fact that certain subject teachers (for example, secondary mathematics and science) and classes with very high performing students enjoy some form of merit pay (Bernardin 2007). Despite the concerns of linking teacher pay to classroom performance, a growing number of school boards in America see this as a cost-effective means to motivate teachers and encourage excellence in teaching. Ornstein and Levine (2006) argue that it should also attract brighter students into the profession, as well as keep good teachers rather than them considering other more competitive salaries outside of teaching.

Retention strategies are thus often built around salaries and compensation (Cappelli 2000), however, according to Salopek (2000), other critical retention strategies include,

*“Communicating how each employee contributes to the corporate vision and mission; Developing a climate of trust; improving the skills level of the managers who supervise professional staff; Providing management training, including effective leadership skills by emphasising development; Clarifying the understanding of employees’ needs and reinforcement of frequent communication; Not burning workers out; Clarifying roles and responsibilities to accelerate learning contribution; Investing in maintaining ongoing commitment by paying the best talent what they are worth”* (Salopek 2000: 20).

Other retention strategies include empowering teachers and stress management. Getting teachers involved in school based decisions increases their empowerment. As teachers participate more in decision making, this will help enhance their professional

status, thus making teaching more attractive (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Stress is harmful to both the organisation and the employees and strategies that help minimise or eliminate harmful stressors or help employees cope with job related stress are required (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004). These days, organisations employ a range of strategies to tackle stress; such as exercises, hobbies, leave (Ornstein and Levine 2006), job rotations, wellness programs, flexible work schedules, family - friendly policies, social support (Zellars 2002) and improvements to the culture, HRM strategies and practices (Gronfeldt and Strother 2006) and some of these could be equally applied in the school environment.

Stress reduction strategies are generally classified as primary, secondary and/or tertiary preventions. Primary prevention strategies tackle stress by modifying or eliminating its sources in the work place. Secondary prevention strategies are concerned with managing the symptoms of stress by, for example, increasing stress awareness and/or improving the stress management skills of individual employees by exposing them to training and educative activities. Tertiary prevention strategies include treatment, rehabilitation and recovery processes for individual employees who have suffered or are suffering from stress related ill health (Cooper 2006).

The HR function is relatively new to Education and effectively designed HR programs should consider the school system as well as the specifics needs of the school employees. Any attraction and retention strategies need to meet the goals of the school and should focus on the processes of recruitment, selection, appraisal and development (Kemske 2000; Webb and Norton 2003). It is therefore necessary to project the need for teachers and plan for their supply with reliable and valid data on employee turnover and



retention to enable HR strategies and decisions to be taken in the future (De Cieri et al. 2005). The strategies also need to focus on resolving problems by schools, districts, subject-matter specialties and gender (Webster et al. 2004). Strategies include offering scholarships, traineeship and internships to attract individuals and especially talented people into the teaching profession (Ramsey 2000).

Mature-age individuals who make a mid career change into teaching after working in other occupations should be encouraged. This requires flexibility in teacher education courses; such as part-time or distance education programmes and recognition of the individual's prior learning and qualifications to teach (Skilbeck and Connell 2003). Overcoming institutional limitations for teacher training can also help solve teacher shortages. Since 2000, there has been excess demand for teacher training places in Australia. Increasing training places, especially for subjects in demand, would create access for those who desire to take up teaching as a profession (Webster et al. 2004).

The government's superannuation scheme is a two-edged sword. On the one hand, it makes teaching attractive especially as teachers can retire at 55 years, but to avoid shortages of mature and experienced teachers at the other end, it would be necessary to increase the retirement age to encourage remaining on the job for a longer period (CRTTE 2003). A strategy for addressing rural teacher shortages, is to follow the example set by the Queensland government school sector, which appoints staff centrally and requires a three-year minimum service period of work in country regions, after which, teachers chose their preferred location (Skilbeck and Connell 2003). In WA, one strategy for providing short-term relief to rural and remote schools is the

teacher flying squad program, which also provided the opportunity to fill short term vacancies across regional and remote WA (DETTWA 2009).

Having the flexibility to balance work life and social life is another strategy. Many industries use a contingency approach to managing their workforce as a way to addressing the changing needs of the business and to respond to customer needs (Bunting 2005) and schools could learn from this. Flexible work practices including flexible staffing levels and work schedules allow organisations adapt to their fast-changing environment (Noe et al. 2007). Similarly, schools benefit from employing contingent workers on temporary, short-term or part-time arrangements and could also make greater use of outsourced /sub contractors, substitute teachers, contract and college interns to help ease the workload (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004).

Offering part-time employment and the option of job sharing has attracted skilled female professionals in other industries back into the workforce. Although this does occur to some extent for teachers, greater use of this strategy could be useful given the high proportion of female teachers, particularly in the primary sector (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004). Schools could take greater advantage of Australia's Family Friendly Workplace policies. A family-friendly workplace establishes policies to support flexible working arrangements, permanent part-time work, job-sharing, career break schemes, paid or unpaid family leave and assistance with childcare and elder care responsibilities, to help workers balance their work and family responsibilities. Policies cover both female and male employees (Hartin 1994; De Cieri et al. 2005; Demerouti 2006).

The educational sector is looking at applying these practices to reduce some of the shortage issues, but more needs to be done, particularly in altering work schedules for staff (Webb and Norton 2003). Other strategies include policy amendments that focus on workload reduction and enhancing the professional status of teachers (Galton and Macbeath 2002; Wilson 2002; Ross and Hutchings 2003). Varying teacher loads will require HR support to ensure this is managed strategically, at the school and system level (Webb and Norton 2003). Another strategy is to develop clear career structures for teachers. Implementing a formal career progression plan for teachers, such as interested teachers taking up educational / school management positions could help educational bodies retain quality teachers within the sector (Ross and Hutchings 2003).

Adopting a recruitment strategy that encourages the employment of former employees could also help. Many organisation's treat employees who have left as 'traitor', but newer approaches that draw on 'alumni' programs can be a cost-effective way to hire candidates (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004) as re-hiring former employees could increase the supply of teachers (Ornstein and Levine 2006). Information provided at an exit interview can help in employee retention. When the employer learns of the reasons an employee decides to leave, strategies can be put in place to address these. For example, identifying problems with managers/supervisors, morale and or job content, allows the organisation to intervene and make changes that could win back an employee who had proposed to leave (Bunting 2005; Noe et al. 2007).

However, an exit interview may not identify the 'triggers' responsible for an employee's decision to leave until it is too late. Therefore, there is a need to understand

the issues of current employees and a proactive method of doing this could be, for example, an attitude survey (Beardwell 2007). International recruiting choices that involve attracting applicants from the worldwide labour market is another strategy for meeting teacher demand. Increasingly, teachers are being sought from other geographical regions, and some are attracted internationally (Fisher et al. 2006). All the strategies described in the foregoing could be used singly or in combinations to improve teacher attraction and retention. The development and implementation of these strategies can be guided through the HR function in the schools.

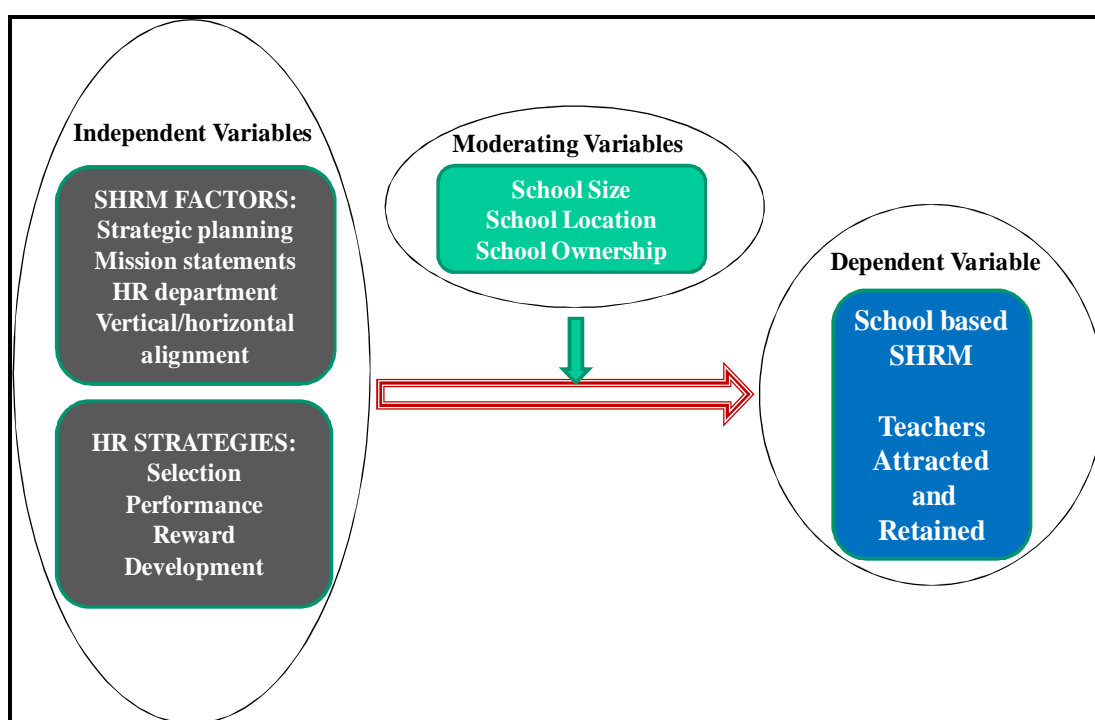
Of course, no organisation can maintain full staff retention and there is always a small portion of employees leaving for various reasons not associated with the job. Turnover is not always a negative thing as it can provide the staff member who is leaving with a fresh start and reenergise their career, and it allows for the introduction of new ideas and ways of thinking from new employees. Given the ever-changing nature of the external environment and the impact this has on the internal environment, no one singular strategy will effectively and forever sustain ongoing improvements in any organisation. The HR role can help the organisation manage these contingency effects, make necessary changes as required and adopt a more flexible approach to planning (Taylor 2005) and management of the organisation's human resources.

## **2.6 Conceptual Schema and Research Questions**

A theoretical conceptual framework was developed from the foregoing literature to explain how SHRM can be implemented in schools and how the strategic integration of teacher selection, appraisal and performance, development and reward can realise

improved teacher attraction and retention outcomes. The relationships in a conceptual schema are expressed using variables or factors which are a logical set of attributes or characteristics (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh and Sorensen 2006; Babbie 2007). The variables can be independent, dependent or moderating. The independent variables have the capability to influence the outcome while the dependent variable is the outcome (Ary et al. 2006). The relationship between these is shaped by the moderating variables.

Figure 2.4: Conceptual Schema Drawn from the Literature



Based on the school model of SHRM in section 2.5.2, the conceptual schema for this research, presented in figure 2.4, suggests that the level of implementation of SHRM in schools (the dependent variable) is measured by the existence of strategic planning process, school's mission and strategic objectives, a dedicated HR department and vertically / horizontally integrated HR functions (the independent variables).

Aligned to this is that the existence of suitable strategically implemented selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance (independent variables) can influence the achievement of successful teacher attraction and retention outcomes (dependent variables). From contingency theory, the degree of SHRM implementation and hence success in realising outcomes, could vary across schools depending on such factors as the schools ownership, size and location [the moderating variables].

The investigation therefore includes schools in the public and private sectors and different locations and schools of various sizes to identify if a school-based model of SHRM can be applied across the sector. The school sector does have processes for implementing strategic human resource management, however the critical question is whether this is actually deployed and having any impact on attraction and retention strategies. This review of literature has helped determine the direction and boundaries for the research and has helped refine two main research questions:

1. *How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?*
2. *Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

## **2.7 Conclusion**

This chapter has discussed the available literature on the various subjects that are associated with the research topic and helped build a theoretical foundation for the

research. This included an overview of the school systems operating in WA and their structures and governance. The particular nature of schools as organisations and the difference of this sector from other industries have been outlined. The chapter has reviewed literature on the evolution and practice of SHRM in other industries and discussed the potential of implementing SHRM more effectively in schools. In addition, the role, functions and operationalisation of SHRM to improve teacher attraction and retention have been discussed.

A school model of SHRM has been justified and proposed and the chapter has argued the case for deploying a school model of SHRM to influence the factors that affect teacher attraction and retention. The aim is to bring about needed improvements through a combination of human resource functions that are interrelated and integrated under a strategic system as recommended by (Barney and Wright 1998) and aligned to the school's mission, goals and objectives as recommended by (Benson and Scroggins 2002).

The overall objective is to investigate the level of adoption and extent of implementation of SHRM in schools in Western Australia. This will extend to identifying strategies within the SHRM framework that could be used to improve attraction and retention of teachers for the benefit of schools in Western Australia and elsewhere. The next chapter discusses the methodology used to test the efficacy of these ideas in practice.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter discussed the theoretical basis of the research by examining related literature and other relevant materials that helped establish the two main research questions for this study. These two questions respectively address the extent of strategic human resource management (SHRM) implementation in the school sector, and the influence of strategic human resource functions for improving teacher attraction and retention. This chapter examines and describes the methodological approaches employed to answer the research questions and the associated justifications based on the applicable paradigms. It also describes the procedures, data gathering processes and analytical procedures employed during this research.

The research was conducted in two phases with the main phase applying case study strategies based on multiple site and multiple method procedures. A preliminary exploratory phase, using a Delphi study was undertaken and the results were used to modify the questions of the case study, which comprised the main phase of the study. The overall methodology was qualitative. A qualitative research approach is well suited to tackling complex social processes that require systematic investigation in their natural setting (Gomm, Hammersly and Foster 1989; Denzin and Lincoln 2000). Since the aim of the study was to understand the implementation of SHRM in schools and its influence on teacher attraction / retention, a qualitative approach was most appropriate.

The research procedures employed a multi-method research design, which is explained as follows and presented schematically in Figure 3.1.



1. The first phase was a three-round Delphi study that involved directors and other officials from school governing agencies (i.e. the public, independent and catholic sectors) and academics.
2. The second phase was a multiple site multiple method case study which included:
  - a. face-to-face in-depth interviews of principals and human resource managers / officers of selected organisations in the school sector.
  - b. electronic in-depth interviews with retired teachers.
  - c. electronic surveys of serving school teachers.

### **3.2 Justification for the Methodology**

Qualitative research methods and techniques use and generate detailed or in depth explanatory information using data from interviews, field observations and documents, in preference to investigating broad generalisable numerical information from surveys, tests and experiments (Patton 2002). Qualitative methods comprise an array of interpretive techniques based on the assumption that reality is socially and subjectively constructed, rather than objectively determined. Hence, the qualitative researcher studies things in their natural settings and tries to explain a phenomenon according to the meanings people give to it through the use of interpretive practices (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Veal 2005). One fundamental characteristic of qualitative research is therefore the “expressed commitment to viewing events, actions, norms, values, etc from the perspectives of the people being studied” (Alvesson and Deetz 2000: 70).

The decision regarding which research method to adopt is typically governed by the paradigm or fundamental beliefs that shape our perception of the subject or guide our action (Burrell, Gibson, Burrell and Morgan 1979; Denzin and Lincoln 2005) and the nature of the questions under study. According to Collis and Hussey (2003), the term paradigm refers to the progress of scientific practice based on people's philosophy and assumptions about the world and the nature of knowledge. Further, they suggest the existence of two main extreme paradigms at opposite ends of a continuum, namely the positivist and phenomenologist or interpretivist paradigms.

The extreme positivist end is referred to as the objective end and adopts the ontological assumption that, firstly, reality is an external and concrete structure and secondly, the social world is the same as the physical world. At the other extreme, the phenomenologist end of the continuum is a subjectivist one and views reality as a projection of the human imagination (Collis and Hussey 2003). The above paradigms indicate two extremes and few would operate within their pure forms. However, amidst these two 'extremes' are a number of alternative classifications, or alternate paradigms.

Although the assumed boundary lines between the paradigms are blurry some authors have established distinct groupings of major paradigms namely: positivism, post-positivism, critical theory, constructivism and participatory action (Collis and Hussey 2003; Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Paradigms manifest themselves in the interconnected issues of ontology [what the nature of reality is], epistemology [what relationship exists between the inquirer and the known] and the methodology [how we can know the world or gain knowledge of it] (Denzin and Lincoln 2005) needed to

understand the research matter. Thus, the researcher is bound within a paradigm or interpretive framework containing his or her ontological, epistemological and methodological premises.

### **3.2.1 Constructivist Paradigm**

Of the above five major paradigms used in research, the researcher viewed the constructivist approach as most appropriate for this study. This is because the intent is to construct a picture of the reality of SHRM practice in schools, based on the collective views of the respondents. Other scholars believe that users of this paradigm are oriented to producing a reconstructed understanding of social relations in the environment (Guba and Lincoln 2005). Complimentary to this is the view that constructivism is based on the premise that human reality is different from the physical world; where people construct multiple realities (Patton 2002).

The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology and acknowledges these multiple realities. It also takes a subjectivist epistemological view where the '*knower*' or inquirer and the respondent co-create understandings. Lastly, it uses a naturalistic set of methodological procedures, which in this respect, relates to work undertaken in a natural setting, in this case the school setting, rather than using laboratory experiments. The findings from constructivist research are usually presented using the criteria of grounded theory (Denzin and Lincoln 2005; Guba and Lincoln 2005). Grounded theory refers to "theory that is developed inductively from a corpus of data. If done well, this means that the resulting theory at least fits one data set perfectly" (Borgatti 2006: 1).

### **3.2.2 Ontology**

The ontological position taken in this research is a ‘relativist’ one. This ontological view is based on the assumption that knowledge may have many different realities, because of differences in perspectives of those involved. Humans have different views based on the reality of their experiences and their differing individual standpoints. These also arise out of the differences in culture, educational systems, belief systems and the physical environment. This means the ‘nature of knowledge’ is really a consensual reconstruction of the many and varied views and opinions individuals form (Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Guba and Lincoln 2005).

### **3.2.3 Epistemology**

This study takes a ‘transactional/subjectivist’ stand in regards to the epistemology. This recognises there is a relationship between the researcher and the researcher’s understanding, which can influence the direction of the research. This also implies that understanding of the topic is created through the interaction between the respondents in the study and the researcher, as earlier suggested. The inquirer and the respondent co-create understanding through their social interaction. Hence, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2000), the understanding of what is discovered or uncovered as reality arises from the interaction between the researcher and research subjects. However, this co-created understanding can also be regarded as a report of the individuals’ opinions, feelings and beliefs, which suggests a subjectivist epistemology (Schwandt 2001).

Pooling the themes of ontology as the nature of knowledge and epistemology as how this knowledge will be understood for this study, the respondents were encouraged to provide feedback based on their understandings. Their views (through interacting

with them) on how SHRM strategies is and could be applied to schools, provided insights into their collective knowledge that helped the researcher build an understanding of SHRM in the school sector, and how SHRM strategies influence teacher attraction and retention and opportunities to enhance these. As a result, the study depended largely on the respondents' understanding of the issues under study; therefore the respondents' knowledge and experiences were critical to the success of the research and for the researcher to develop reliable propositions.

### **3.2.4 Methodology**

In view of the foregoing, the methodology needed to follow naturalistic [investigation of a phenomenon in its naturally occurring contexts], hermeneutical [this requires the interpretation of generated data] and dialectical principles. The dialectical approach for viewing and understanding society and social development assumes that everything is in a constant state of change, interconnected and related to other social phenomenon. It seeks to ascertain the relationships between interconnected social phenomena such as identity, quantity, quality, and any contradictions within these related social phenomena. The dialectical procedures thus bring into focus the full range of the interactions that occur in the world and help the researcher construct a view of the reality so this can be presented to other people (Ollman 2003).

The interpretive process aims to examine the truth or validity of respondents views so that a theory about what happens in their reality can be developed (Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Guba and Lincoln 2005). The need to develop an accurate picture of respondents' reality justified the choice of a qualitative case study approach as the main

methodology for this research. This approach allowed the researcher to explore the respondents' view of reality and match this against their understanding of the topic, while still allowing the relevant situational factors associated with the case and study participants to be uncovered.

Given that qualitative research is creative and interpretive in nature (Marshall and Rossman 1989) the aim is to construct an accurate interpretation of the meaning of the data, which requires added effort to merely collating the information. Adopting the case study research methodology meant that a large amount of information was gained from a relatively small sample of the population through interviews and discussion with the respondents. This provided contextually based insights and understanding. Studying specific schools and key internal stakeholders provided a broader understanding of the phenomena in line with the principles recommended by a number of researchers (Gomm et al. 1989; Marshall and Rossman 1989; Denzin and Lincoln 2000).

Similarly, the preliminary Delphi study helped develop an initial understanding of the complexity of the subject (Linstone 1978). The Delphi study participants selected by the researcher were key external stakeholders with expert knowledge on the subject of SHRM in schools and teacher attraction and retention. The findings from the Delphi study were used to refine the Case study questions. Unlike the Delphi study respondents, who were external stakeholders, the case study participants were all internal to the school system. Gaining the different perspectives of the two groups of stakeholders without necessarily seeking convergence, allows for a more complete understanding.

### **3.3 Research Strategy Design**

The conceptual framework described in the preceding chapter identified two central questions for the research and these are:

- 1. How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?*
- 2. Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

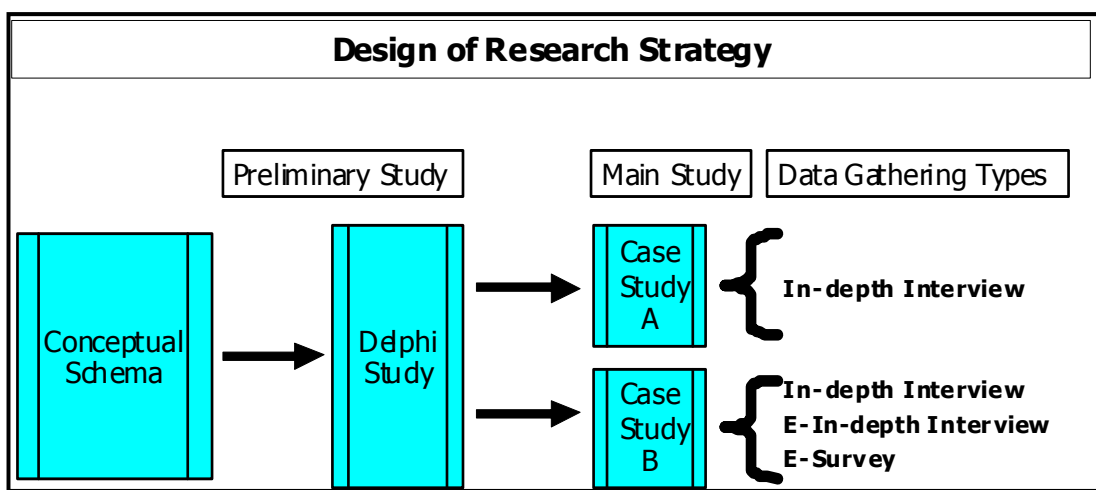
One challenge was to ensure the questions could be researched for it must be possible to provide answers using a feasible research strategy within the time-frame and resources available. The research strategy involves decisions about different aspects of the research process; information gathering methods, data analysis methods, budget and timeframe (Veal 2005). The “design is the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of study” (Yin 2003: 19).

Thus, the research design is an active process and guides the investigator on the concepts under study; how to measure these concepts; what approaches should be used; who or what will be studied; the means of data collection; and how to analyse and interpret the data to answer the initial research question. The basic rationale for having a design is to help avoid unwanted errors in the data (Yin 2003; Davis 2005). There is usually no one single or definite best design and the choice of design, which can include multiple designs, is to solve the research problem. A comparison is having a road map. This allows the researcher to make decisions that may include modifying the original

design according to the pressing factors (such as cost, practicability of the research) at the time of the research (Davis 2005).

The research strategies adopted are highlighted in Figure 3.1, which shows the research followed a multi-method strategy. This involved the Delphi study and Case study approach. The case study used multiple data gathering procedures, including face-to-face in-depth interviews, electronic in-depth interviews and an electronic survey. The research also involved multiple categories of participants, namely external school stakeholders (directors / officials of school governing agencies and academics) and internal stakeholders (principals, school human resources managers / officers and school teachers - both serving and retired).

Figure 3.1: Research Strategy Design



The use of multiple methods allows for triangulation, which helps in capturing a sound and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. Combining multiple methodological practices, empirical materials, perspectives and participants in a single



study adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to the inquiry. This is a characteristic of qualitative research, which does not have a distinct set of methods or practices, but can use several qualitative methods and even statistics, tables, graphs and numbers, to provide important insights and knowledge (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Furthermore, triangulation with different approaches, methods and techniques in the same study has emerged as a way to overcome the bias and narrowness of a single method approach (Collis and Hussey 2003). Details of the associated methods and procedures are provided in the subsections that follow.

### **3.3.1 Delphi Study Phase**

The Delphi technique is a consensus seeking exercise conducted as a medium-term forecasting method with a group of people who are knowledgeable in the subject area (Bonnemaizon, Cova and Louyot 2007). The technique is designed to elicit expert opinions from the participants (Helmer 1983); the experts on the subject can be anyone capable of contributing solutions to the research question (Schmidt 1997). A series of questions are distributed to the participants iteratively until their answers reach a consensus. The technique is a method for “*structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole to deal with a complex problem*” (Linstone and Turoff 2002: 3).

The four phases of a Delphi study are as follows. The first phase is exploratory and uses open-ended questions which make it possible for the participants to contribute additional information and address the problems or issues in a broad way (Martino 1983; Linstone and Turoff 2002). The second phase is used to arrive at an

understanding of the matter under discussion, based on the views of each individual with any disagreements noted. The third phase explores the significant disagreements from the second phase, whilst the fourth phase wraps up the findings from the first three phases (Ludwig 1997; Linstone and Turoff 2002). In reality however, four phases are not always required.

In many instances, three rounds are sufficient, thereby saving the cost of more iterations (Altschuld 1993), or there may be nothing further to add after two rounds (Reeves and Jaunch 1978). Hence, it is advised that a series of at least three questionnaires should be used with the number of rounds being determined by either the time it takes to reach consensus or when no new information will be gained from a subsequent round (Ludwig 1997; Linstone and Turoff 2002). Despite its advantages, the Delphi technique is not without criticism.

One criticism of the Delphi technique is that experts can be biased or lack sufficient knowledge to answer a given question (Dalkey 1972). Another shortcoming is that the anonymity could potentially give the panelists the sense of a lack of accountability. In addition, because there is no opportunity to test their arguments as in a face-to-face discussion, respondents could be careless. Lastly, the repetitive nature of the cycle of questions can make them slow and time-consuming (Sackman 1974; Rowe, Wright and Bolger 1991). These potentially negative aspects need to be considered before venturing into a Delphi study (Linstone and Turoff 2002). Notwithstanding, the Delphi technique has benefits over other methods of panel decision making, because of the consensus of opinions from a group of experts (Dalkey 1972; Helmer 1983;

Linstone and Turoff 2002).

The Delphi technique is usually applied for solving problems, planning and decision-making (Strauss and Zeigler 1975; Van Dijk 1990; Dunham 1998) and can help with forecasting by extrapolating past trends and constructing future scenarios (McKinnon and Forster 2000). As a structured communication process, Delphi has a number of advantages. Firstly, it is anonymous in the sense that individual responses are not publicly identified by a third party. Secondly, it has a controlled feedback of contributions from the individual participants. It also gives participants a chance to revise their views if possible (Dalkey 1972; Linstone and Turoff 2002) as the procedure involves multiple rounds.

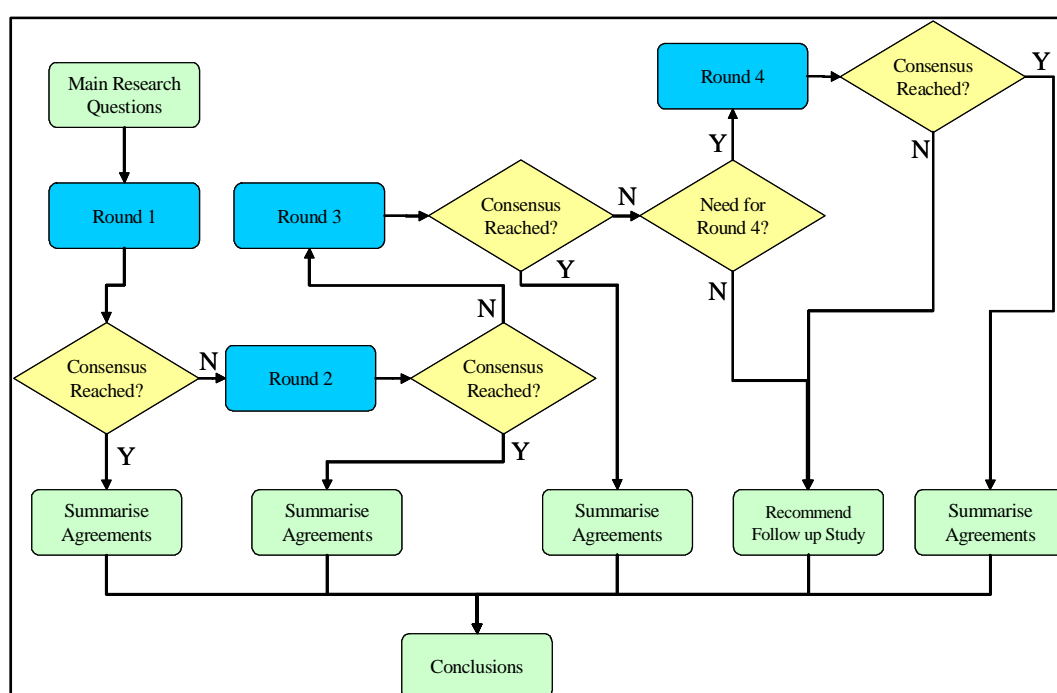
#### **3.3.1.1 Delphi Procedure**

The Delphi study commenced when letters were sent with an abridged version of the research proposal to twelve prospective participants inviting their participation. Eight agreed to participate in the study and were sent a cover letter describing the nature of the study with the first round of open-ended questions attached. These are shown in Appendix 3.1. The cover letter explained that the aim was for the panel of experts to explore the relevant concepts and reach a consensus about the status of strategic human resource management and its role in helping schools achieve their teacher attraction/retention outcomes.

Participants returned their responses to round 1 questions within two (2) weeks. These were analysed and the results used to generate the questions for round two. See

Appendix 3.2 for the round 2 questions. The procedure was repeated for the second and third rounds. Themes that reached consensus in a particular round were excluded from subsequent rounds. Round three questions are provided in Appendix 3.3. All questionnaires were sent and responses were received via electronic mail. Figure 3.2 presents a flowchart showing the Delphi procedure employed for this research.

Figure 3.2: Delphi Procedure Flowchart



Round 1 responses were exploratory and provided qualitative data. Analysis involved identification and grouping of responses into themes. In subsequent rounds, the responses were converted into quantitative data. This analysis was possible because the questions, excepting those that involved ranking factors, were based on a five point (four point for one of the questions as five were not applicable) Likert scale, that ranged from strongly disagree, to disagree, fairly correct, agree and strongly agree. The four point Likert scale ranged from never, to seldom, sometimes and always. The use of the

Likert scale allowed the frequency of responses in each category to be computed and presented in frequency tables.

Frequency tables report the number of times a subject item occurs (Haslam and McCarthy 2003) and these were used to record the number of times the same response was made by different participants. The three measures of central tendency- the Mean, Median and Mode were employed where appropriate to evaluate the responses. The median is the best indicator of a typical or most representative measure, the mean is the best indicator of the combined measure, whilst the mode is the measure with the highest frequency, hence it is the best indicator of the most popular measure (Ary et al. 2006). Mean data were used to evaluate consensus, whereas the median and / or mode were employed as primary or secondary ranking criteria (to break a tie if it occurred) for responses that ranked competing factors.

The Likert scale was translated into a numerical scale based on the relevant central tendency computations as shown; *Strongly Disagree (SD)* = 1 ( $\geq 0.5$  to  $< 1.5$ ); *Disagree (D)* = 2 ( $\geq 1.5$  to  $< 2.5$ ); *Fairly Correct (FC)* = 3 ( $\geq 2.5$  to  $< 3.5$ ); *Agree (A)* = 4 ( $\geq 3.5$  to  $< 4.5$ ); and *Strongly agree (SA)* = 5 ( $\geq 4.5$ ). For an accurate conclusion to be drawn, it is important to set the criteria to identify when consensus has been reached (Hill and Fowles 1975) and in this case, consensus was determined as follows:

- *Consensus to agree: Mean score of 2.5 and above with no disagree or strongly disagree unless such disagreement could be waived or considered an isolated opinion.*
- *Consensus to disagree: Mean score of less than 2.5 with no agree or strongly*

*agree unless such agreement can be waived or considered an isolated opinion.*

### **3.3.1.2 Delphi Participants**

There are two main criteria to be satisfied while selecting a Delphi study panel. The first criterion is that experts should have a great deal of knowledge and expertise on the subject. Secondly, they should be representatives of the profession being studied as demonstrated by meeting specified criteria in relation to their vocation and sector (Dalkey and Helmer 1963). Table 3.1 shows the weighting of participants against the set criterion.

Table 3.1: Delphi Study Participants and Study Criteria Expectations

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>% of Participants</b>
Involvement with developing and reviewing HR strategies and policies that affect teachers in Public or Private schools.	<b>75</b>
Responsibility for teacher workforce planning and strategic HR management.	<b>63</b>
Experience in the school sector either as a teacher or direct management of secondary or primary schools.	<b>75</b>
Responsibility for teaching student teachers (primary/secondary).	<b>25</b>
Responsibility for conducting research on teacher motivational issues.	<b>75</b>
Possessing knowledge of current teacher issues in public and private school sectors.	<b>100</b>

Table 3.1 shows all the criteria were met by a majority of the participants. The exception was ‘responsibility for teaching student teachers’ which was included as a specific requirement for the academic participants. The average experience of the participants was 15 – 20 years and apart from the academics, the participants were high

profile professionals holding senior positions as HR consultants to different organisations in the school sector. The Academics were university lecturers with extensive experience in teacher education and as researchers at tertiary institutions. Therefore, from their personal profiles, the participants can be called experts on the research subject.

There is arguably no general rule for determining the size of a Delphi panel. However, the selected sample size should consist of enough participants to give the expertise necessary for an effective study (Bunning 1979; Schele 2002). The breakdown of participants is shown in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Delphi Study Participants Listing

<b>DELPHI STUDY PARTICIPANTS</b>							
<b>Categories</b>	<b>Invited</b>	<b>Participated</b>	<b>Withdrew</b>	<b>Completed Round 1</b>	<b>Completed Round 2</b>	<b>Completed Round 3</b>	<b>Participants Code</b>
Academics	3	2	0	2	2	2	<b>Panelists 7 and 8</b>
Independent Schools System	3	3	0	3	3	3	<b>Panelists 1, 2 and 3</b>
Catholic Schools System	4	2	0	2	2	2	<b>Panelists 4 and 5</b>
Government Schools (Department of Education & Training)	1	1	0	1	1	1	<b>Panelist 6</b>
State Teachers Trade Union	1	0	0	0	0	0	Not Applicable
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>Panelists 1 to 8</b>

Six of the participants were from the three school sectors – Public sector representatives were from the WA Department of Education and Training; the Association of Independent Schools of WA represented the Independent schools and the Catholic Schools were represented by Catholic Education Commission. The remaining

two participants were academics from the School of Education, Murdoch University. The academics were included because of their role in producing the teaching workforce.

The first round of the Delphi study started on 30 November 2005 and the study was completed in March 2006. The following steps addressed criticisms of the Delphi technique. Firstly, the potential lack of sufficient knowledge to answer the given question was overcome through use of participants who were experts on the research subject. Secondly, response accountability and testing of the arguments were addressed by using a three-round iteration process employed, so respondents had the opportunity to reflect on and amend their comments. The potential for a slow and time-consuming process was improved by using electronic data transfer (see section 3.3.3) to send and receive feedback from the participants. The outcome of the Delphi study enabled the researcher to refine the Case study questions. The results are presented in the Chapter 4.

### **3.3.2 Case Study Phase**

Case studies are defined in terms of the research process, the unit of study (the case) or the end product of this type of investigation (Merriam 1998). A case study is also regarded as a choice of what is to be studied rather than a methodological choice (Stake 2005). A case study is thus “a thing, a single entity, a unit around which there are boundaries or a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (Merriam 1998: 28).

A bounded system or case is selected because it represents some concern, issue or hypothesis. A case study is arguably the preferred strategy when the research



questions are in the form of 'how' or 'why' (Yin 2003) and according to Merriam (1998), researchers use case studies for different reasons. Firstly, because of their particularistic nature, a case can examine a specific instance but the result illuminates a general problem. Secondly, because the case draws on descriptive data and can obtain information from a wide variety of sources, such as interviews, observations and documents, to present information in a wide variety of ways and from different viewpoints. Thirdly, from its heuristic quality, a case study can explain the reasons for a problem, the background of a situation and what happened and why?

Other merits of the case study approach include the ability to place people, organisations, events and experiences in their social context and being able to use multiple methods and flexibility in the data collection strategy. This allows researchers to adapt their research strategy as the research proceeds (Veal 2005). Case studies can be classified into three different types (Stake 2005). There are intrinsic case studies where the study is undertaken because of the need for better understanding of the particular case. A second type is an instrumental case study where a particular case is examined to provide insight into an issue or to redraw a generalisation. The third is a multiple case study or collective case study where a number of cases are studied jointly in order to investigate a phenomenon, population or general condition.

The case is a single example of some phenomena of interest. This can be a single organisation, or part of an organisation such as a work unit or workplace, or a product or event. A research project using the case study method may involve more than one case, with comparisons between them being a feature of the research. However,

each case needs to be separately identifiable and subject to an individual description and analysis, which typically involves comparable types of data (Veal 2005). As shown in Figure 3.1, two case studies were employed to address the research questions. The two cases are:

- ***Case Study A: A case study of 10 school organisations showing how strategic human resource management (SHRM) is implemented in WA schools.***
- ***Case Study B: A case study of teachers in WA schools on how the strategic application of human resource factors can positively influence attraction and retention.***

Each case study deals with a different perspective when seeking to answer the research questions. Case study A examined the school sector as a single industry, using multiple sites to address research question 1. On the other hand, Case study B targeted teachers, using multiple methods, to address research question 2. The details of the data gathering procedures, participants and analysis methods are discussed in the following sub-sections.

### **3.3.2.1 Procedures and Methods for Case Study A**

Case study A was a multiple site study involving ten (10) schools/organisations and the goal was to investigate the extent to which SHRM was implemented. Although each site generated particular interest, the ten sites were studied jointly for comparative investigation. Thirteen (13) participants representing the WA Independent, Catholic and Department of Education and Training school sectors were involved in the study.

The selection of the Case (i.e. study sites and participants) is important if meaningful conclusions are to be drawn from the study. Veal (2005) suggests case selection for multiple cases can be purposive, typical, atypical or pragmatic. Purposive selection involves choosing from a range of organisations of similar or different sizes, in the same or different industries, with comparable or contrasting geographical locations. Typical or Atypical selections occur when the case is chosen because it is either typical or atypical of the phenomenon being studied. For instance, a study examining the secrets of success in a particular industry might select the most successful or even the least successful companies for the study. Pragmatic selection involves choosing cases for pragmatic reasons – for example, when the researcher has ready access to a company because he or she is an employee.

Initially, 16 schools from across the public and private sectors were purposively selected from a list of Western Australian schools, based on three factors. These included the ranking of the Tertiary Entrance Examination [TEE] scores (schools were selected from each performance quartile of the list), geographic location (metropolitan/regional) and the economic status of the community where the school was located. However, only one purposively selected school agreed to participate in the study. Therefore, the researcher selected typical schools, with either a human resource function or those that showed interest in the topic. This second list was drawn from schools or organisations that attended a workshop on ‘The Evolution of HR in Education’ organised by the Australian Human Resource Institute (AHRI) in July 2006. Nine (9) school organisations from this group, plus the one described above, made up the ten participating sites of Case study A.

Another question often asked about multiple case design is what number of cases is sufficient for the study? Because the goal of multiple sources of evidence is to provide rich descriptions of the phenomenon being studied, the key issue is to seek convergence in a triangulating fashion (Veal 2005). Also, because a sampling logic is not used, the “typical criteria regarding sample size ... are irrelevant” (Yin 2003: 51). The 10 participating sites were deemed adequate as they covered all three school sectors, including both primary and secondary schools.

Data for Case study A was gathered using in-depth interviews. Interviews represent one of the most important sources of case study information because they cover a broad scope (Alvesson and Deetz 2000; Yin 2003). Data collection usually involves other strategies such as observing and analysing documents, however all methods are not used in equal degrees. One method usually predominates and others play a supporting role (Merriam 1998) and in this study the dominating method was interviewing.

An in-depth interview is characterised by its length, depth and structure and tends to be longer than simple questionnaire based interviews, typically taking at least half an hour and often several hours. As the name implies, the in-depth interview encourages respondents to talk, asks supplementary questions to probe responses, asks leading questions, and asks respondents to explain their answers (Yin 2003; Bunting 2005; Veal 2005). Yin (2003) explains that rather than use structured queries, the interview is a guided conversation that has a stream of fluid, rather than rigid questions, whilst pursuing a consistent line of inquiry. Interviews can be both structured/semi-

structured, thereby offering flexibility to obtain a greater breadth of data (Fontana and Frey 2000).

Most face-to-face in-depth interviews for this study lasted approximately one hour for each respondent. Each participant was invited to express their views on the implementation of strategic human resource management policies in schools. A combination of structured/semi-structured interview techniques was used to provide more flexibility. Leading questions, probing questions, follow up open-ended questions and prompts were used to clarify particular responses, although care was taken not to lead the participants in the discussions.

Despite their value, interviews have some problems, which potentially could impact negatively on the outcome. Alvesson and Deetz (2000) raise concerns that the subjective beliefs, attitudes and psychological traits of the interviewees can influence their capacity to reflect the actual reality. Similarly, there could be a negative influence resulting from the social interaction between the researcher and interviewee. These authors caution moderation is needed when evaluating the significance of interviews. The researcher considered the above interview problems and where possible, and appropriate, interviewed more than one participant per location to minimise potential negative subjective influences. Another solution was to support the interview data with documentation requested from the participants during the interview.

A verbatim transcript provides an accurate record of the in-depth interviews and helps ensure data completeness. The transcripts were used to “analyse the results of the

interviews in a more methodical and complete manner than is possible with notes” (Veal 2005: 131). Hence, tape recording (after receiving consent from the participants) was employed as the main means to record the interviews and where appropriate, supplementary notes were taken. The recorded interviews were transcribed into MS-Word documents and an electronic file made for each participant.

The next step in the procedure was data analysis. The essence of any analytic procedure is to return to the terms of reference, the conceptual framework and the research questions or hypotheses relationships of the research (Veal 2005). Analysing case study data involves examining, categorising, tabulating, and testing to address the initial propositions or questions of the study. The objective is to produce high quality analysis via a deductive process (Miles and Huberman 1984; Yin 2003; Veal 2005)

The first technique employed in analysing the data involved building a general explanation for each of the individual cases. A second technique involved using cross-case synthesis to generate data from the individual sites according to a uniform framework or into themes consistent with the conceptual framework and research questions. This is in line with the recommendations for a multi – case study (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Veal 2005).

Before analysis commenced, methodical procedures were carried out to classify and organise the data. This is either completed manually, or if faced with a substantial number of lengthy documents, with a computer-aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) package. A common package is the NUD.IST Vivo (NVivo) software from

Qualitative Solutions & Research Pty Ltd (QSR) (Veal 2005). In this research, the transcribed interviews were coded to the themes and sub-themes of the interview questions using NVivo; however, the data were subsequently exported from NVivo into MS-Word for further manual analysis before the findings were reported.

In-depth interviews of ten (10) case study sites formed Case study A. Interviews were held between August 2006 and February 2007 and examined how SHRM is implemented in each site. The sites comprised six (6) independent schools, three (3) Catholic schools and the Department of Education and Training, which represented public schools. The thirteen (13) participants were comprised of 2 principals, 9 HR managers / officers and 2 directors as shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Case Study A Participants and Interview Dates

	<b>Sector</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interview Date</b>	<b>Participants code</b>	<b>Case study code</b>
1	<b>Independent</b>	Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	16-Aug-06	CS1	Case CS1
2		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	17-Aug-06	CS2a	Case CS2
3		Metropolitan	Principal	17-Aug-06	CS2b	
4		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	21-Aug-06	CS3	Case CS3
5		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	23-Aug-06	CS4	Case CS4
6		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	18-Oct-06	CS5	Case CS5
7		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	11-Dec-06	CS6	Case CS6
8	<b>Catholic</b>	Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	16-Aug-06	CS7	Case CS7
9		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	7-Feb-07	CS8	Case CS8
10		Metropolitan	Principal	24-Aug-06	CS9	Case CS9
11	<b>Public</b>	Region	HR Mgr/Officer	4-Aug-06	CS10a	Case CS10
12		Metropolitan	Director	4-Aug-06	CS10b	
13		Metropolitan	Director	15-Sep-06	CS10c	

Similar to the Delphi process, the respondents were initially issued with a letter that introduced the study and explained the research process. Confirmatory telephone calls were made prior to conducting the interviews. A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix 3.4. Questions 1 to 4 address Case study A, Questions 5 to 10 address Case study B, whereas Questions 11 to 15 relate to the participants' demographics and are common to both case studies.

### **3.3.2.2 Procedures and Methods for Case Study B**

This case study examined how the strategic application of human resource factors can positively influence teacher attraction and retention in WA schools. The objective was to examine why people are attracted to / or remain in the teaching profession and how the SHRM implementation could positively influence attraction / retention outcomes. The entity of concern for this case study was teachers in WA secondary and primary schools.

Multiple data gathering and a multiple participant case study approach was used. This approach relies on the descriptive nature of case studies (Merriam 1998) so information from a wide variety of sources, view points and from a variety of ways can be gained. The research design for Case B was three-pronged, as depicted in Figure 3.1. This case incorporated face-to-face in-depth interviews, electronic in-depth interviews and an electronic survey. The participants were drawn from principals and human resource managers / officers, retired teachers and serving teachers respectively. This approach is supported by literature, for instance;

*“...often a case study involves a variety of qualitative and quantitative data*



*about the case, which may be collected and analysed using a number of methods. In fact the use of a variety of types of data and analysis can be said to be a key feature of the study method as the sheer variety of data and types of data analysis would offer a 'rich' description of the case"* (Veal 2005: 170).

Furthermore Yin (2003), argues that case study data gathering can range from non-structured interviews to situations where the interview entails more structured questions, along the lines of a formal survey. The survey can be part of the case study as it produces qualitative data as evidence, although this approach has been a subject of some debate. Despite the underlying philosophical differences separating qualitative and quantitative methods, several researchers see the benefit of combining these paradigms within a research stream or even within a single study. They argue that coupling the methods can provide a more complete picture than each methodology achieves alone (Bryman 2006; Shah and Corley 2006). Furthermore Yin (2003), suggests that in certain case study situations, the interview entails a formal survey, which could be used to produce additional data as part of the study.

This multiple method-participant design strategy was used to generate detailed and broad based information from the participants about the prevalence of teacher shortage issues in WA. The objective was to generate strategies for improving teacher attraction / retention from the perspectives of these three categories of important stakeholders. The remainder of this subsection describes the triple procedures of Case study B.

**Face-to-face in-depth interview:** The procedure for the face-to-face in-depth interviews followed the same procedure as for Case study A. Appendix 3.2 provides a copy of all the questions used and Questions 5 to 10 were applicable to Case study B. The data were coded into themes and analysed with the NVivo software, using a cross-case analysis instead of detailed descriptions of each individual site because the focus was not the individual sites, but teachers across the sites. The cross-case synthesis looked for recurring patterns, singularities, or variances and confirmation of how these were affected by specific local and contextual variations as recommended in literature (Dey 1995; Merriam 1998). The findings from this set of interviews are presented in Chapter 4 and contain recommendations for improving teacher attraction and retention.

**Electronic in-depth interview:** Electronic interviews of some recently retired teachers, which sought their perspective on issues affecting teacher attraction and retention and the role of SHRM, were carried out between June and August 2006. The retired teachers fall under the Typical or Atypical criterion suggested by Veal (2005). These teachers provided a different and very useful perspective, as they represented a typical set of successful teachers who had completed their career and left the profession by natural attrition, even if they had taken early retirement. Because they had remained in teaching until retirement, the assumption was that they would be more willing to participate, and have the time to do so. In addition, since they were no longer employed in the formal school system, they could offer relatively unbiased views.

This procedure involved an electronic advertisement for respondents on the WA Retired Teachers' web page. An electronic version of the questions was lodged on the

Murdoch University website and interested respondents accessed the questions via a hyperlink. Answers were typed online and sent directly to the researcher's e-mail address by an automatic web-e-mail trigger. These questions are also attached in Appendix 3.5. The questions were divided into two sections; Section A contained the interview questions and Section B asked for demographic data.

The questions focused on what attracts people to teaching, why teachers leave and what strategies could improve the attraction/retention problems. Open ended and closed questions were used respectively to help generate qualitative and quantitative data that was used to rank some aspects of the questions. Five retired teachers responded - see Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Retired Teachers Interview Participants and Response Dates

<b>Retired Teachers E-Indepth Interviews</b>				
<b>Participant Code</b>	<b>Date of Response</b>	<b>School Location Experience</b>		
		Metropolitan	Region	Remote
RT01	29 June 2006	Yes	Yes	
RT02	30 June 2006	Yes	Yes	Yes
RT03	30 June 2006	Yes		
RT04	3 July 2006		Yes	Yes
RT05	3 August 2006	Yes	Yes	

While five is a small sample size, the major goal was to enrich and support the data obtained across the Cases. In addition, the combined experience of the participants covers all the areas of the research interest as the combined sample had experiences in subject areas where there are teacher shortages (Mathematics, Science, LOTE),

contained both male/female genders and had worked in all three locations (metropolitan, regions and remote).

**Electronic survey:** The third data gathering method used in Case Study B was an electronic survey amongst serving teachers in the public school sector as these are the ones currently employed as teachers. The survey of the active teachers was undertaken between July and December 2006. The survey methodology sought to generate strategies for improving teacher attraction and or retention and investigate the association, if any, between the teachers' personal characteristics and their views on the teacher shortage problems. A cross sectional survey was chosen as it is an appropriate method for gathering data at one point in time (Ary et al. 2006). The sample was restricted to teachers in the public schools because the Delphi study found the teacher shortage issues to be most prevalent in the public school sector and these were most accessible.

The process of administering the questionnaire and electronic receipt of responses was similar to the procedure used for the retired teachers. A notice on the WA DET website invited teachers to participate in the online survey. A sample of the questionnaire is attached in Appendix 3.6. Again, questions focused on what attracts people to teaching, why teachers leave and the strategies they would recommend to improve attraction and retention. The questionnaire asked for quantitative and qualitative responses and demographic data. In all, thirty-one (31) teachers responded and the distribution of their teaching experience by location is shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Teacher Survey Respondent Spread

Teacher Survey Teaching Location Experience		
Metropolitan	Regional	Remote
23	7	1

Given there are over twenty thousand teachers in WA, this was a very small response that could return biased results. There are a number of reasons for this that most likely relate to timing. At the time of the survey, the teaching profession and the education system in WA was the subject of much publicity and very apparent teacher disenchantment, over a Government proposal to push through an outcomes-based-education (OBE) scheme that teachers felt they were ill prepared to implement. In addition, teachers' opinions were being canvassed in surveys by other agencies in collaboration with the Department and a separate survey on 'Beginning teachers' by the Australian Education Union. These prevailing circumstances may have discouraged teachers from participating in the survey.

Ary and colleagues (2006) suggest that if after all attempts have been made to improve response and response is still low, the characteristics of the respondents such as age, gender, education, socioeconomic status, etc should be compared with those of the population to establish if the respondents are representative of the population. However, given the very small response rate, it did not seem appropriate to undertake this comparison. Although the responses contained both quantitative and qualitative data, because the quantitative data set was quite small, which poses reliability problems, only non-parametric analysis with Microsoft Excel was utilised to identify percentages and central tendencies (e.g. mean, standard deviation, median). Clearly, the results of this

need to be accepted with caution, but consistency of opinions does add weight to other evidence across the Cases.

Cross tabulations were also used to see if there were different patterns among the groups and whether a relationship existed between the variables (Ary et al. 2006). The qualitative portion of the data was subjected to thematic analysis to examine and categorise the data gathered into sub-themes under each issue covered by the questions. The next section discusses the pros and cons of electronic means of data collection.

### **3.3.3 Electronic Data Collection Methods**

The explosive growth of the internet globally has enabled the development of a multitude of online delivery options (Davis 2005). This research employed online or electronic (e-mail, internet) methods as well as the traditional offline methods (mail, telephone or face-to-face interviews). The benefit of the online approach is that electronic collection allows people in different geographical areas to communicate their experiences and opinions without long-distance travel (Im and Chee 2006). E-mail interviews cost considerably less to administer than telephone or face-to-face interview and as Meho (2006) points out, has become a viable tool for qualitative research. Online methods also decrease the cost of transcription.

Some of the above benefits were realised during this research. The retired teachers and serving teachers were geographically spread apart, so the use of online methods helped save expenditure on travel, postage and transcription of the responses. Similarly, the cost of the Delphi study was minimal and the two-week inter-round

review and analysis was made possible because it did not involve transcribing. Additional savings could have been made if an online method had replaced the face-to-face interviews; for example, it would have saved travel to the Pilbara region of WA (~2000 km from Perth) to conduct an interview and the high cost of transcription; however, this was not considered appropriate as it could also reduce data richness.

The disadvantages of online methods, as identified by Meho (2006), include the possibility of delays if a respondent takes days or weeks to reply and important visual or non-verbal cues are missed as facial expressions or body language cannot be read. On the other hand, e-mail interviews reduce, if not eliminate problems associated with interviewer/interviewee effects that might result from visual or non-verbal expressions. Overall, e-mail interviewing “offers an opportunity to access, in an interactive manner, participants’ thoughts, ideas and memories in their own words” (Meho 2006 :1291). Finally, because no single data collection method is suitable for all situations, the data needs of each problem, in conjunction with the cost and time constraints should influence arriving at the best option (Davis 2005).

### **3.4 Ethical Considerations**

Whenever investigators enter into the daily lives of others there is the potential for ethical problems to arise and this is particularly so in a qualitative study (Locke, Spirduso and Silvermann 1993; Christians 2000) and requires careful consideration. This research complied with the Murdoch University Code of Conduct for Research. Firstly, informed consent (subjects agreeing voluntarily to participate without physical or psychological coercion) was sought and participation was on a voluntary basis.

Written consent was obtained from the participants, confirming that they understood the nature of the study and that their participation was voluntary. Examples of the relevant consent agreement letters used are attached in Appendix 3.7.

Secondly, there was no deception or misrepresentation, the letter introducing the study explained the nature and process of the study and assured respondents of confidentiality. All data obtained in the study were coded to protect respondent confidentiality. The eight participants of the Delphi study were coded as Panelist 1 to Panelist 8; the face-to-face in-depth interview ten case study sites and thirteen participants were respectively coded as Case CS1 to Case CS10 and CS1 to CS10c; the five retired teachers were coded RT01 to RT05 whilst the thirty-one teacher survey participants were coded as TS01 to TS31.

Finally, the researcher worked to ensure data accuracy. Interviews were recorded verbatim to avoid inaccuracies or omissions, as recommended by the University Code for Research. Details relating to management of the ethical considerations for the research were submitted to the Human Ethics Committee and no fieldwork was undertaken until approval was obtained. This raises another ethical consideration that relates to ensuring the information gathered is valid and reliable.

### **3.4.1 Validity and Reliability**

*“Ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the investigation in an ethical manner” (Merriam 1998 :198).*

Internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality and



asks, ‘do the findings capture what is really there?’ Internal validity is defined as “the degree of confidence that the results are true given the study situation” (Davis 2005 :149). External validity on the other hand, is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations and is defined as “the degree to which the study’s results can be generalised across populations, settings and other similar conditions” (Davis 2005 :150).

Demonstrating that research satisfies both internal and external validity requirements is a challenge. Triangulation, by using multiple investigations, multiple sources of data, or multiple methods to confirm emerging findings help to enhance internal validity. External validity is enhanced through rich, in-depth descriptions so that readers can determine whether the findings apply to their situations. Also, the use of several sites, cases and situations, especially those that maximise diversity in the phenomenon of interest could enhance external validity (Merriam 1998).

The multiple method research design of using a preliminary Delphi study, face-to-face in-depth interviews in different sites and the multiple method-participant case studies support the internal and external validity of this research. The overall research validity was supported by the use of combined procedures and the validity of the individual Delphi study and Case study phases is explained below.

According to Bonnemaizon and colleagues (2007), the validity of a Delphi study is based on a rigorous selection of experts whose combined expertise reflects the full scope of the problem and the number of experts. The minimum recommended number

is 5-7 experts, with 8-10 offering the best precision and cost ratio. Going beyond 12 experts makes further information marginal. The method's validity relies on a strict implementation process, of usually three iterations, to obtain a satisfactory consensus. Using statistical measures of central tendency in subsequent rounds affirms the responses and supports validity and reliability (Dalkey, Rouke, Lewis and Synder 1972; Jackson 2003). These criteria were all satisfied during this phase of this research.

Similarly, using multiple cases helps strengthen the precision, validity and stability for the case study phase. This is a common strategy for enhancing external validity or generalisability of findings (Merriam 1998) because the case studies gain credibility through triangulating the descriptions and interpretations (Stake 2005). Furthermore, valid responses are more likely from the participants as they are interested in and informed about the topic. Protecting anonymity for questionnaire respondents implies this encourages greater truthfulness (Ary et al. 2006).

Reliability refers to the extent to which research findings can be replicated, i.e. if the study is repeated, will it yield the same results? Reliability in Social Sciences is problematic because human behaviour is never static (Merriam 1998); therefore dependability or consistency can describe reliability. Rather than demanding the same results the research is deemed reliable if the results make sense and are consistent and dependable. The question is therefore not whether the findings will be repeated, but whether the results are consistent with the data collected. Collectively, using triangulation through the use of multiple methods of data collection and analysis strengthens reliability (Merriam 1998) and suggests the research is reliable.

### **3.5 Conclusion**

The chapter has described the methodologies employed in the research and provided justification that the data gathering and analysis has been thorough. The choice of the constructivist paradigm was made so the collective views of the respondents are used to construct a picture of their reality. The research design called for a multi-method and multi-participant strategy, which entailed a preliminary Delphi study and Case study approaches, using multiple data gathering procedures, including face-to-face in-depth interviews, electronic in-depth interviews and an electronic survey.

The choice of multiple categories of participants, including external school stakeholders (directors / officials of school governing agencies and academics) and internal stakeholders (principals, school human resources practitioners and both serving and retired school teachers), was explained. Multiple methods were used to aid triangulation, which helps secure an in-depth understanding of the subject and enhances the validity and reliability of the study.

The approach to the analysis was explained. To deal with the large amount of qualitative material gathered, the data was recorded, analysed and interpreted using methods in accordance with the Murdoch University Code of Conduct for Research and other ethical considerations. The next chapter contains detailed analysis of the data and the resulting findings from the research.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the methodological approaches, data gathering processes and analytical procedures employed to answer the two main research questions, which respectively address the issues of strategic human resource management (SHRM) implementation in the school sector and the influence of SHRM in improving teacher attraction and retention. This chapter details the analysis of the three-round Delphi study and the Cases Studies. The two central research questions are:

1. *How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?*
2. *Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

The Delphi study was used to provide preliminary answers to both research questions. The first question was further explored via the multi-site case study using face-to-face in-depth interviews of principals and human resource managers. The second question was addressed in the multi-method case study, which included the ten multi-site interviews, an electronic in-depth interview of retired teachers and an electronic survey of serving schoolteachers. The analysis of the data generated from each phase of the study are presented in sequence, with the analysis of the Delphi coming first, followed by the Case studies A and then B.

## **4.2 Delphi Study Findings**

Three consecutive rounds of the Delphi study were conducted between November 2005 and March 2006. The aim was to reach a consensus about the current and existing human resource management practices in WA schools and to identify whether SHRM strategies were used to improve teacher attraction and retention. Eight (8) experts participated in the Delphi study; six respondents, who were senior personnel in human resource positions, represented the three school sectors; the Public, Independent and Catholic School Sectors and the remaining two respondents were education academics from a WA University.

These participants satisfied the two main Delphi selection criteria; they were experts who had a great deal of knowledge and expertise on the subject and were representative of the profession under study. Apart from the academics, the participants had between 15 – 20 years professional experience in human resource management in the educational sector. All possessed knowledge of current teacher issues in their school sectors.

The two central research questions were translated into four main questions to start the Delphi process in Round 1. These four main questions are:

1. Is teacher shortage a major problem for primary and secondary schools in Western Australia?
2. How does the Strategic human resource management (SHRM) model currently work in the school sector across Western Australia?

3. How adequate and effective are the current human resource management practices within the school sector in helping to attract and retain teachers in Western Australia?
4. What additional human resource management strategies are suggested to improve the attraction and retention of teachers?

As Round 1 was exploratory in nature, the responses to each question were collated into themes. Testing for consensus or differences of opinion was not conducted in round one as it was used to generate ideas based on the four main questions. The themes collated from Round 1 were reframed and resubmitted as questions to the respondents for reconsideration in Round 2 to see if consensus could be reached in the context of their broad range of opinions on the topic.

Responses to Round 2 questions were then evaluated for consensus using the criteria set out in section 3.3.1. The same process was used to identify divergence in opinions and to inform reframed questions for Round 3. The aim of continuing iterations is to gain consensus and new information. Where this is not forthcoming, no further iterations are required. Three rounds were used in this study.

The findings from the three rounds for each of the four main questions are presented in the subsections that follow. The response pattern percentages and mean calculations for each main question and associated themes are presented in a series of tables.

#### **4.2.1 Teacher Shortage Problems in WA**

*Main Question 1: Is teacher shortage a major problem for primary and secondary schools in Western Australia?*

##### **4.2.1.1 Round 1**

In round one, the exploratory question asked was “Do you think teacher shortages are a major problem for primary and secondary schools in Western Australia? Can you please explain why?” The following four themes were generated from the round one responses, namely:

1. Teacher shortage in general is not currently a major problem in WA but would become so in the next 5-10 years if strategies are not implemented to address the issues.
2. Instead of a general shortage in numbers, specific problems have been identified, namely gender bias, staffing schools in regions, shortage in specific learning areas, ageing workforce.
3. The identified problems in theme 2 above vary across sectors with government schools appearing the most affected, whilst independent schools are the least affected.
4. In WA, the problem of teacher shortage seems to be more with retention than attraction.

In subsequent rounds as described below, these four themes were further clarified and tested for consensus. The mean pattern and percentage distribution of the responses to each of the themes is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Question 1 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores

Question	Themes	% Likert Scale Responses					Mean
		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Fairly correct	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	
1. Is teacher shortage a major problem for primary and secondary schools in Western Australia?	1.1 Teacher shortage in general is not currently a major problem in WA but would become so in the next 5-10 years if strategies are not implemented to address the issues.	0.0%	0.0%	37.5%	37.5%	25.0%	<b>3.9</b>
	1.2 Instead of a general shortage in numbers, specific problems have been identified, namely gender imbalance, staffing schools in regions, shortage in specific learning areas (e.g. Mathematics, LOTE, etc), ageing workforce.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%	<b>4.8</b>
	1.3 The identified problems in sub-statement 1.2 above vary across sectors with government schools appearing the most affected, whilst independent schools are the least affected.	0.0%	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	0.0%	<b>3.0</b>
	1.3 (Rd 3) The identified teacher shortage problems appear to vary by location with schools in the regions (irrespective of sector type) experiencing both a general shortage in numbers as well as other specific problems.	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	62.5%	25.0%	<b>3.9</b>
	1.4 In WA, the problem of teacher shortage seems to be both with retention as well as attraction.	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	50.0%	12.5%	<b>3.6</b>

#### 4.2.1.2 Round 2

Round two tested if there was consensus amongst the participants for each of the above four themes. For the first theme, consensus was reached that general teacher shortages are not a current problem for WA (mean score agreeing was 3.9), although there are shortages in some specific areas and the threat of future shortages. These will become more critical in the next 5-10 years as the teacher population ages, unless strategies are implemented to address the issues. Similarly, all responses were in agreement (4.8 mean) with the second theme that gender imbalance, staffing schools in rural and remote regions, and specific learning areas such as, Mathematics, Language other than English (LOTE) etc) and an ageing workforce were current problems. Panelist 6 also noted that gender imbalance is more pronounced in primary schools. No further



clarification was required because consensus was reached.

Responses diverged (mean score 3) on the third theme related to the variation the problems identified across sectors with government schools being the most affected. Panelist 1 stated problems were uniform across the sectors, 37.5% of the respondents claimed they lacked sufficient knowledge to make comparisons. Panelist 8 claimed shortages were more apparent across locations rather than by sector, with independent schools in metropolitan areas being least affected. Panelist 4 claimed Catholic schools were not currently greatly affected. This question was carried forward to round 3 for clarification. The last theme question asked if the threat of teacher shortages was more aligned to retention or attraction. Responses varied, although 87.5% of the respondents agreed that it is more a problem with retention. Panelist 6 indicated that both problems are apparent. This theme was reworded to obtain a clearer position in Round 3.

#### **4.2.1.3 Round 3**

Round three followed up with the third and fourth themes that required additional clarifications. In this round, for the third theme, apart from one academic, all agreed (mean score 3.9) that problems vary by location. Regional schools, irrespective of sector, experience both general shortages as well as specific problems like gender imbalance and shortages in specific learning areas (Mathematics, LOTE, etc).

Respondents agreed problems were more pronounced in the regional, and especially remote, schools. *“WA has some of the most remote schools in Australia and all sectors experience recruitment and retention problems in these areas”* said Panelist 4. Panelist 1 added that in general, *“getting staff in the metropolitan area or large*

*regional centres is easier than more rural and remote areas*". Panelist 1 also identified that problems varied by type of school in the independent sector, for example, a strong Christian faith may attract teachers to less appealing areas as they see this as part of their contribution to students' future and the church. Given the consistency among the practitioners, this theme was not pursued as no further definitive information was likely to be gained.

Responses to the fourth theme in Round 3 indicated that retention in remote schools is slightly less of a problem than attraction for independent schools. On the other hand, attraction is less of a problem in coastal areas and metropolitan schools. Attraction and retention problems appear to be equal in regional government schools, but attraction is the lesser problem in metropolitan schools. The Catholic sector indicated attraction was an issue in regional areas, but retention is the most problematic in remote areas. As Panelist 4 explained *"people will go, but move out more quickly. This may partly be because remote areas are happy if someone stays for 2 years, whereas rural areas would regard this as too short a stay"*. Responses from round three are summarised by sector in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Variation in Attraction and Retention Problems by School Sector

Sector	Location	Problem Area
Independent	Regional	Attraction is more of the problem for remote schools. Attraction is a lesser problem for some regions e.g. coastal regions.
	Metropolitan	Attraction is a lesser problem. In some cases, there are no issues with retention or attraction.
Catholic	Regional	Attraction is more of the problem for very remote schools. Attraction is a lesser problem for some rural schools.
	Metropolitan	No clear-cut dominance between attraction and retention problems. In some cases, there are no issues with retention or attraction.
Government	Regional	Although attraction seems more of the problem, there is no clear-cut dominance between attraction and retention problems as both exist.
	Metropolitan	Attraction is a lesser problem.

In summary, problems arise due to both the attraction and retention of teachers. Understanding which problem is dominant depends on the location, but attraction becomes more of a problem the more remote the school in all sectors. Retention will become a worsening problem as the teaching workforce ages.

#### **4.2.2 SHRM Implementation in WA's School Sector**

*Main Question 2: How does the Strategic human resource management (SHRM) model work in the school sector across Western Australia?*

##### **4.2.2.1 Round 1**

Responses from Round 1 to the exploratory question "Please explain how this model [SHRM] works in the school sector, particularly in relation to attracting and retaining teachers in the teaching profession across Western Australia?" generated the following three themes.

1. A feature of the strategic model of human resources management requires that the HR functions are linked to the organisation's business goals through strategic planning. The school sector (at school, district or state level) prepares annual, 5 years and 10+ years strategic plans. The use of strategic planning to support the school's goals and teaching workforce projections varies from organisation to organisation.
2. HR policies, practices and strategies to address problem areas of teacher attraction/retention exist for schools. However, the alignment of the approaches with the SHRM model varies from school to school and sector to sector. Sector based summary and opinion on existence of the SHRM model are shown below:  
  
Independent – There is no sector-wide approach. Recruitment and selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance management (including

succession planning) are addressed by schools. Independent schools teachers award guidelines available for consultation on e.g. staff appraisal. SHRM seems not strictly in place.

Catholic – Catholic Education Council of Western Australia (CECWA) issues policies, but school Principals are ultimately responsible for decision-making and compliance. SHRM seems not strictly in place.

Government – Centralised strategic approach to HRM through its SHRM directorate, which aligns workforce planning, recruitment, recognition, development and retention strategies. SHRM seems in place at central level.

3. For strategic HRM to be effective in any sector, it has to be deployed at both central (as appropriate) and local school level.

In subsequent rounds as described below, these three themes were further clarified and tested for consensus. The mean pattern of responses and the percentage distribution of the responses to each of the themes is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Question 2 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores

Question	Themes	% Likert Scale Responses					Mean
		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Fairly correct	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	
2. How does the Strategic human resource management (SHRM) model work in the school sector, particularly in relation to attracting and retaining teachers across Western Australia?	2.1 A feature of the strategic model of human resources management requires that the HR functions are linked to the organisation's business goals through strategic planning. The school sector (at school, district or state level) prepares annual, 5 years and 10+ years strategic plans.	0 Never	0 Seldom	42.9% Sometimes	57.1% Always		3.6
	2.2 HR policies, practices and strategies to address problem areas of teacher attraction/retention exist for schools. However the alignment of the approaches with the SHRM model varies from school to school and sector to sector	0.0%	14.3%	28.6%	42.9%	14.3%	3.6
	2.3 For strategic HRM to be effective in any sector, it has to be deployed at both central (as appropriate) and local school level.	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%	4.5

#### **4.2.2.2 Round 2**

Round 2 tested for convergence of opinions on the above three themes. The first theme related to how strategic planning is undertaken in the schools. The aim was to question if the school sectors (at central or local school level) prepared annual, medium and long-term strategic plans to support the school's goals and teaching workforce projections. All agreed (mean score 3.6) that strategic planning is undertaken in schools. However, the level of planning varies from school to school. The government schools implement central strategic plans but Panelist 1 commented that centralised planning is not applicable for the structures of the independent schools.

The second theme questioned if HR policies and practices were aligned with the SHRM model and if SHRM was in place in all school sectors. The Catholic sector indicated that the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) issues HR policies, but school principals are ultimately responsible for decision-making and compliance. The government sector has a centralised strategic approach to HRM through its SHRM directorate and in the independent sector, recruitment and selection, appraisal, rewards, development and performance management (including succession planning) are addressed by the schools. The mean score was 3.6 indicating agreement, however, Panelist 6 disagreed, and there was some variance in opinions, as shown in the following comments.

Generally, SHRM would be in place in larger independent schools, but it is usually the principal that handles HR matters in smaller to medium schools. This general statement cannot be applied to all schools in the sector (Panelist 1). Panelist 4 commented that in the Catholic sector *“Part of the SHRM is to appropriately delegate certain HRM functions. The fact that there is not central control over all issues should*

*not be read as SHRM not being in place*". Similarly, Panelist 6 stated that many government schools now have the capacity for the local selection of staff. Although the Central Office develops many of the strategic policies, plans and initiatives, human resources is essentially a function devolved to line management in schools and districts where SHRM is implemented and tailored to the local needs. This second theme was referred to round 3 for additional clarifications because of Panelist 6's disagreement.

The last theme questioned if SHRM has to be deployed at both the central (as appropriate) and local school level for it to be effective. Respondents generally agreed (mean score 4.5) that SHRM needs to be devolved to the local school level to be effective. Panelist 1 identified that in most of the independent sector, strategic HRM operated at the local, as the Association of Independent Schools in Western Australia (AISWA) does not address this aspect of schooling. Few of the independent schools e.g. Anglican Schools Commission, Swan Christian Education Association, belong to a larger systems and would have a 'Central' Level.

#### **4.2.2.3 Round 3**

In Round 3, to help clarify the outstanding issues related to the second theme, additional prompts were obtained from the WA SHRM framework that was presented in Figure 2.2 and section 2.5.1 in Chapter 2. Participants were requested to assess the extent to which the SHRM elements are being practiced in their school sector. Answers were based on a scale of 1 – 10 with 1 being SHRM not in place and 10 SHRM fully in place.

The average score for each sector was computed and the result was 7.3 for the Independent, 7.0 for the Catholic and 7.5 for the Government sector. The scores suggest

that the existing HR policies, practices and strategies being implemented for schools in all three sectors are reasonably in line with the SHRM framework. The experts however offered some specific explanations that help qualify the above result. Panelist 1 commented that “.... *the only real bit lacking in some schools would be performance management ... in some larger schools this is very much in place but in smaller schools it tends not to be the case*”. Panelist 2 said “*I am unable to comment with any certainty but my impression is that, generally, it [SHRM] is highly in place in Independent Schools*”.

For the Catholic sector, Panelist 5 said “*I think that there is a definite strategic approach within the Catholic sector. However, as schools have a certain level of autonomy it is difficult to assess the extent of the impact*”. An expectation of one of the elements of the SHRM framework required bias free employee recruitment, selection and induction processes being consistently deployed throughout the organisation. Panelist 4 stated that the requirement may not be feasible in the Catholic sector because it “*may be the antithesis of what the sector is aiming for. The sector is based on being ‘different’ and therefore recruits / inducts to preserve the difference – to preserve the bias*”.

Panelist 6 identified the Government sector had a strong approach to SHRM and the effectiveness of this approach relates to the implementation of HRM. An issue for this sector is that communication, resourcing and training of managers in a large and geographically diverse agency can affect the effectiveness of the SHRM approach, which means that although the approach exists, the extent to which it is effectively applied may be inconsistent due to internal and external factors. The above SHRM

scores suggest that HR policies, practices and strategies are implemented in all three sectors and are reasonably in line with the SHRM framework, although the full extent of application could not be verified in the Delphi study. In addition, the experts suggested the need to modify some aspects of the existing business SHRM framework to allow for contingencies and reflect the peculiarities of the school sector.

### **4.2.3 Current HR Practices for Teacher Attraction/Retention**

*Main Question 3: How adequate and effective are the current human resource management practices in helping to attract and retain teachers in Western Australia?*

#### **4.2.3.1 Round 1**

The Round 1 exploratory question asked was “Do you think the current human resource management practices within the school sector are adequate and effective in helping to attract and retain teachers in Western Australia?” The existing human resource management practices aimed at attracting and retaining teachers are outlined as follows based on the responses from the eight participants in Round 1. Panelist 1 responded that Independent sector schools do seem able to attract and retain qualified and committed teachers, not just because of pay, but possibly due to the culture of the school, in terms of the school ethos, work culture and the respect given teachers. Independent schools also have an advantage when seeking to employ new staff as explained by Panelist 2.

Firstly, they are in preferred locations, such as, the metropolitan area or in the desired cities and towns (Albany, Bunbury, Busselton, Esperance, Geraldton and Mandurah). Secondly, the independent schools are not bound by the constraints of a staffing formula. The independent schools are often able to offer small classes, which in



turn are attractive to teachers.

Adopting short-term measures when necessary was another strategy considered by independent schools. Prior to the creation of the Western Australian College of Teaching (WACOT) in 2004, Independent Schools could legally employ less qualified but not formally unqualified as teachers in specific circumstances. Today, WACOT still has provision for “Limited Authority to Teach” (LAT), which means that unqualified but suitable persons can be given a LAT and employed to meet an urgent need. This power could be extended! In addition, according to Panelist 3, different types of schools, in terms of religion, philosophy and or community, creates the opportunity for teachers to gravitate to these independent schools where they feel best placed. Once there, the schools manage staff retention in a way that is beneficial for both the school and staff well-being.

According to Panelist 4, the Catholic sector’s HRM model creates a balance between central management (policy / guidelines parameters and technical support) and local decision making (direct employment and management of own staff). The central body has initiated a range of recruitment projects / programs such as, Kimberley Calling, Remote Area Package, Housing and Rental assistance schemes, Scholarships (pre and in-service), immersion programs. Panelist 5 further commented that for the Catholic sector, the

*“existing practices for teacher attraction/retention are a step in the right direction, however, anecdotal evidence suggests that improving and providing incentives is not where people see the issue. The greatest fear is with lifestyle and quality of living. The reality, according to teachers returning from the country, is*

*that lifestyle and quality of living is not an issue. There is real difficulty in transferring this information to new teachers ... From HRM it means that some of the strategies are ineffective” (Panelist 5)*

For the public sector, Panelist 6 claimed that the DET has effective attraction and retention strategies. The Department is the largest employer of teachers and is therefore able to offer wider employment opportunities and expanded career structures such as Senior Teacher, Level 3 Classroom Teacher as well as district and central office roles. The Department provides financial assistance to practicum students through the Student Teacher Rural Experience Program to experience teaching in country towns, the \$40,000 Final Year Teaching Scholarships, and permanency after one year for graduates who received ‘awards’ for academic excellence from their respective universities.

Nonetheless, the Department has some disadvantages because it manages a high volume of transfers and placements of permanent teachers at the central level each year. Permanent teachers need to be placed before vacancies are identified and this can slow down the recruitment and subsequent placements of new teachers. On the other hand, the Catholic and Independent school sectors employ at an individual school level and are therefore able to quickly identify and recruit for a vacancy. The Catholic and Independent schools are also able to more quickly identify and offer places to quality graduates during their final teaching practicum. This means that good quality candidates, particularly in learning areas of shortage, will have been offered appointments in private schools in the metropolitan area before the Department is able to offer a position.

The above responses confirm a variety of strategies already exist in the school sector for helping to attract and retain teachers. However, the participants suggested that these strategies have not fully been able to combat the teacher attraction and retention problems. Some of the reasons for this ineffectiveness have been stated above, but others are explained as follows. For instance, Panelist 7 commented that teachers in general are principally motivated to support their students' learning in the best way they can and to make a difference to their students' lives. Inducements such as financial rewards and promotion opportunities, while of course important, are not the main focus of teachers' ambitions. This respondent suggested the focus to be on enabling teachers to better achieve their goals for student learning for example, through providing better in-class support (from employing more and better-paid teacher assistants), and giving teachers more time to plan and assess learning.

Furthermore, the study found that a human resource management model might be too limited to fully take account of the complexities of teachers' aspirations and goals for their work. The participants cited negative public attitudes to the profession and a shortage of students studying in the areas of shortage; such as, secondary mathematics and science. There is also the finding that positive developments in performance management and professional development (such as Competency Framework for Teachers, Curriculum Framework and the allocation of several paid days each year for teachers to attend PD sessions) are not very effective. This is because the PD sections are often a top-down approach that might not provide what teachers actually need. For example, there is a strong focus on the implementation of new government policies and less on recognising teachers' other (and often more immediate) professional development needs.

Finally, the following response from Panelist 8 highlights the inadequacies in the existing strategies.

*“I understand the difficulties of servicing the educational needs of students in a state that is as vast as WA. DET is able to access graduates to fill the majority of positions in remote communities and in most learning areas. However, I think a return to a scholarship system (with a lot more funding under the rural scholarship scheme) to attract students to teaching could be implemented. There is also the problem of retention. So current HR management is generally OK in most circumstances, but inadequate in retaining experienced teachers. The job has changed so much, the pressures are enormous and teachers are exhausted – and it also doesn’t help having an anti-teacher media that continually focuses on the negative, so attracting recruits is an on-going issue” (Panelist 8).*

The panelists suggested a range of factors that can influence attraction and retention of teachers. The Panelists’ suggestions were categorised into the six groupings for ranking in round two and the ranking outcome was tested for consensus in round three as shown below. The mean pattern of responses and the percentage distribution of the responses to this theme is presented in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Question 3 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores

Question	Themes	% Likert Scale Responses					Mean
		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Fairly correct	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	
3. How adequate and effective are the current human resource management practices within the school sector in helping to attract and retain teachers in Western Australia?	3.1 (Rd 3) From research, the decision to remain in teaching employment in a school location is a function of several factors. In the WA environment, the factors that can be influenced by SHRM were ranked higher than other groups of factors.	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	71.4%	14.3%	<b>4.0</b>

#### **4.2.3.2 Round 2**

Round two asked the respondents to rank in order of importance the six categories of attraction and retention factors, namely:

1. **Personal characteristics of teachers** (e.g. race, age, gender, religious/philosophical affiliation, personal motivational factors – love for children, etc)
2. **Alternative employment opportunities** (other industries, attrition due to inter-sector movements, favorable early retirement packages)
3. **Living conditions in the area where school is located** (e.g. social – economic factors, relationships, etc.)
4. **School conditions** (stress levels, academic performance, class sizes, workloads, availability of trained class assistants, school size, organisational culture/school ethos)
5. **Working conditions** (Compensation/reward/recognition schemes, career progression, effective professional development, fair appraisal and performance management)
6. **Perception that teaching is unappealing/unattractive**

Participants responded with their rankings for each category starting with 1 as the most important. The individual rankings were converted into a combined result, and the median and mode were used to rank the factors. This result was then sent to the participants in Round 3 to check for consensus.

#### **4.2.3.3 Round 3**

Round 3 was conducted to obtain the participants' agreement or disagreement with the ranking outcome (See Table 4.5 for the results) using a 1 – 5 Likert scale with 1 being

strongly disagree, ranging to 5 being strongly agree, and 3 being neutral or fairly correct. The Round 3 responses confirmed (mean score 4.0) the agreed ranking of the categories influencing attraction/retention.

Table 4.5: Ranking of Attraction/Retention Influencing Factors

Rank	Factor	Median	Mode
1	Working conditions	2	2
2	School conditions	3	3
3	Living conditions in the school area or school Location	3	5
4	Alternative employment opportunities	4	5
5	Personal characteristics of teachers	4.5	6
6	Perception that teaching is unappealing/unattractive	5.5	6

The results identify that “working conditions” and “school conditions” have the most critical influence on teacher attraction/retention. The working conditions and some aspects of school conditions can be influenced by appropriate human resource management strategies. Although generally agreeing to the results, some participants added a few specific comments. For instance, Panelist 2 said personal characteristics of teachers were very important for Independent Schools. It is also worth noting the comment from Panelist 8 in Round 2, that some of the sub-factors in a category may be more important than others, depending on individual circumstances.

#### **4.2.4 SHRM strategies to Improve Teacher Attraction / Retention**

*Main Question 4: What additional human resource management strategies are suggested to improve the attraction and retention of teachers?*

##### **4.2.4.1 Round 1**

The Round 1 exploratory question was “Can you please identify and explain at least three (3) human resource management practices, which you think might improve

teacher attraction and retention through closing the gaps indicated in question 3 above [referring to section 4.2.3 main question]”. The following two themes were collated from the round one responses.

1. Effective deployment of strategic HRM can help address some of the factors that contribute to teacher attraction/retention problems
2. A total of fourteen (14) HR strategies that will help improve WA teacher attraction/retention issues were provided by the panel in Round 1 (Table 4.7).

As described below, these two themes were transferred to round two to check for consensus, including the need to rank the first seven out of the fourteen strategies in the second theme for which the ranking result was tested for consensus in round three. The mean pattern of responses and the percentage distribution of the responses to each of the themes is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Question 4 Response Distribution in Percentages and Mean Scores

Question	Themes	% Likert Scale Responses					Mean
		1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Fairly correct	4 Agree	5 Strongly agree	
4. Suggest human resource management strategies which might improve teacher attraction and retention.	4.1 Effective deployment of strategic HRM can help address some of the factors that contribute to teacher attraction/retention problems	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	62.5%	25.0%	4.1
	4.2 (Rd 3) A total of fourteen (14) HR strategies that will help improve WA teacher attraction/retention issues were provided by the panel in Round 1. Seven most important strategies were ranked in the order participants considered important.	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	57.1%	14.3%	3.9

#### 4.2.4.2 Round 2

For the first theme, respondents generally agreed (mean score of 4.1) that effective deployment of SHRM can help improve teacher attraction/retention. Panelist 8 added that no one strategy by itself can deliver the necessary improvement rather there is a

need to take into account factors outside HR as well. The second theme was for participants to recommend the seven most important strategies, from the fourteen (14) strategies provided by the panel in Round 1, starting with 1 as the most important. The responses were ranked using the statistical mode and where the mode was equal, factors were re-ranked using the distribution of their scores as a secondary criterion. The different strategies were then organised into relevant taxonomic groups, as shown in the last column of Table 4.7. The ranked result was forwarded to the round 3 to obtain consensus.

Table 4.7: List of Suggested Strategies to Improve Attraction/Retention

S/Nos	Strategies	Ranking	Groups
<b>A</b>	Provide more focused support for professional learning for teachers in the first one to two years of their career. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• early professional development,</li> <li>• on-the-ground and mentoring support in the school, supported by reduced class contact time,</li> <li>• engagement in further focused study to enhance practice, and</li> <li>• develop positive behaviour management strategies.</li> </ul>	<b>1<sup>st</sup></b>	Development
<b>B</b>	Provide support for experienced teachers who want to further their professional learning after some years in the profession. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide time allocations and pay fees for teachers who want to undertake a postgraduate degree. Such further study can re-energise and re-motivate teachers, and help avoid 'burn out'.</li> </ul>	<b>4<sup>th</sup></b>	Development
<b>C</b>	Pay higher salaries. Enhance the monetary rewards associated with promotion, including the system of promotion, which is often slow and laborious.	<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Reward
<b>D</b>	Reduce workload, e.g. minimize combination of teaching with administrative duties, smaller classes, etc.	<b>5<sup>th</sup></b>	School Conditions
<b>E</b>	Enhancing the ethos, culture at the school level, respect staff, as they are a school's most important asset.	<b>3<sup>rd</sup></b>	School Conditions
<b>F</b>	Employers (e.g. DET, schools) to develop stronger relationships and support with students during their teacher training. For example, quarterly recruitment e-newsletter from the DET disseminated to university students.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Recruitment
<b>G</b>	Investigate a program confirming employment for high achieving graduates prior to the transfer and appointment process.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Recruitment
<b>H</b>	Develop mechanisms to reward and retain teachers within their first 1-year, 5 years, 10 years of employment.	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Reward



S/Nos	Strategies	Ranking	Groups
<b>I</b>	Provide some guarantee of employment for teachers in the metropolitan area after a specified time in the country schools.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Reward
<b>J</b>	Provide additional support for professional development of teachers in their formative years while in the country. One example was improve cultural awareness training for teachers new to indigenous communities e.g. Connecting with Culture program of the Catholic sector.	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	Development
<b>K</b>	Need for greater recognition of the work teachers do and the stresses of their job. Some form of reward/recognition for their time in the country.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Appraisal / Reward
<b>L</b>	Continued professional development is essential. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have a work culture that rewards formal learning (e.g. higher degrees)</li> <li>• improve promotional possibilities and</li> <li>• have greater capacity to allocate time for staff to pursue professional development.</li> </ul>	<b>Not Critical</b>	Development
<b>M</b>	Professional development of new principals in selection processes to ensure that they pick up any difficulties and do not just hire blind. Also, to understand the skill sets of teachers required for best fit of the school.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Selection
<b>N</b>	Schools across all sectors should have the right to recruit staff, and some flexibility in pay and service conditions, etc. Independent schools have that now but Government schools do not.	<b>Not Critical</b>	Selection / Reward

#### 4.2.4.3 Round 3

The respondents agreed with the ranking outcome (returned a mean score 3.9) on the identified seven important strategies to help improve WA teacher attraction/retention issues. These are shown as items A, C, E, B, D, H and J in Table 4.7 in order of importance. Although the experts generally agreed to the result on the most critical factors, there were some specific comments, which highlighted a case for other strategies as important. The items at L, M and N, which relate to professional development and the right to recruit staff were also important to some. For example, Panelist 4 advised that Principals with the capacity to hire their own staff can improve retention of staff if they get the ‘fit’ right (M) rather than just taking anyone. Similarly, item N is more important for the public sector. The result also tends to suggest that strategies for retention are relatively more important than strategies for attraction.

#### **4.2.5 Summary of Delphi Study Findings**

In all, the Delphi study identified a number of factors related to the research questions. The findings suggest that the existing HR policies, practices and strategies in all the sectors appear to be in line with the SHRM framework, however, could not verify the extent of uptake. Some form of strategic planning is undertaken in all schools although the level of planning varies from school to school. There does appear to be a need to modify some aspects of the existing business organisation - type SHRM framework to reflect the peculiarities of the school sector, one thing all participants agreed with was the need for SHRM to be deployed at the local level, as well as the central level for it to be effective.

The Delphi study also confirmed teacher shortages are in general, not a current major problem in WA, but shortages will become an issue in the next 5 years, as the teaching population ages. Other specific problems include gender imbalance, difficulties staffing schools in remote areas, and shortage in specific learning areas (e.g. Mathematics, LOTE, etc). The problems vary by location, with the remote areas (irrespective of sector type) experiencing both a general shortages as well as the other specific problems.

The most critical factors influencing teacher attraction and retention were ranked in order of importance. These were working conditions, school conditions, living conditions in the area where school is located, alternative employment opportunities, the personal characteristics of teachers and the perception that teaching is unappealing /unattractive. The experts agreed that effective deployment of strategic HRM could help address attraction and retention problems and identified the following seven strategies as most critical.

**Professional Development Strategies:**

- Providing more focused support for professional learning for teachers in the first one to two years of their career – early professional development {1<sup>st</sup>}
- Providing further educational support for experienced teachers {4<sup>th</sup>}
- Provide more support for country teachers (particularly in early career) {7<sup>th</sup>}

**Reward Strategies:**

- Paying higher salaries {2<sup>nd</sup>}
- Develop reward and retention strategies to address career stages (teachers within first 1-year, 5 years, 10 years of employment) {6<sup>th</sup>}

**School Conditions Strategies:**

- Enhancing ethos and culture at the school level - respecting staff {3<sup>rd</sup>}
- Reducing work load - minimise combination of teaching with administration duties {5<sup>th</sup>}

**4.3 Case Study A Findings: Status of SHRM Implementation**

The above Delphi study findings helped provide a basis for the approach taken in the case studies. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 detail and elaborate on the findings from the case studies.

*Case Study A: Case study of 10 school organisations showing how strategic human resource management (SHRM) is implemented in WA schools.*

The first central question of the research was ‘How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?’ To

answer this question, case study A involved in-depth interviews with thirteen participants from ten WA school organisations (coded CS1 to CS10). The following four key requirements of SHRM in an organisation were examined to give an indication of the degree of implementation of SHRM in each case study site:

1. **Is there an established strategic planning process?** This question examined the strategic planning process in the school/organisation. It also covered the strategic plan document, its contents, the planning frequency and time horizon. For study sites that had a central organisation, the question checked whether the strategic planning process was centralised or devolved to the local school level.
2. **Is there a clear statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives?** This question investigated if strategic objectives were communicated to all employees and if the strategic objectives covered every aspect of the organisation's business. Examples of strategic objectives and mission statements were checked, where these were available, then the researcher checked how they were stated in terms of desired results, appropriate quantitative performance indicators and/or in terms of the actions required to address emerging areas of concerns in the organisation.
3. **Is a dedicated HR department in existence?** The purpose of this question was to verify the responsibilities of the HR department within the context of SHRM. The questions investigated the existence of a dedicated HR department, the number of employees in the HR department, the presence of a dedicated HR Manager and the role the department played in strategy formulation / implementation and whether HR functions were centralised or localised. Examples of key strategic roles, as separate from operational responsibilities of the HR department were examined. These included HR involvement in:

- the strategic planning process;
  - helping the organisation adapt to changes in the external or internal business environment. This refers to the actions taken by HR in response to events such as tight labour markets, changing workforce demographics or changes in the organisation's systems and culture.
  - building human capacity to support strategic initiatives. This includes human resource planning, which involves forecasting future staffing needs and taking steps to recruit new employees or train existing employees to meet the demand.
4. **Are personnel policies and practices vertically aligned and horizontally integrated?** This question examined if the personnel policies and practices were in vertical alignment with the school/organisation's mission and strategic objectives. This was achieved by checking how the strategic objectives were communicated within the organisation and how the HR department managed the personnel-related implications of the strategic objectives. For instance, did strategic planning determine priorities for HR planning? The question also investigated the horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices with each other. An example was to see if the performance management process provided a linkage between business objectives on individual performance and development needs.

#### **4.3.1 Case Demographics**

The in-depth interviews were carried out between August 2006 and February 2007 and the ten (10) case study sites comprised of six (6) Independent schools, three (3) Catholic schools and one (1) public sector organisation represented by the Department of Education and Training. The thirteen (13) participants comprised two (2) principals,

nine (9) HR managers/officers and two (2) directors. Appendix 4.1 presents the distribution of the participants and site demographics. The findings are presented in two formats; first is a detailed description of each case and next is a comparative cross-case analysis of the sites.

### **4.3.2 Status of SHRM Implementation: Detailed Case by Case Description**

#### **4.3.2.1 CASE CS1**

Case CS1 is a large independent school, with almost 1100 students in combined primary / secondary streams. The school is located in the Perth metropolitan area and governed by a school council and executive management team. The respondent, CS1, was the HR Manager. The HR manager is not a member of the executive management group.

**Strategic Planning Process:** Strategic planning is the responsibility of the executive management team and the HR manager is not fully involved in this planning process. The HR manager is new to the organisation and there are plans for greater involvement. According to CS1:

*“...there has been an acknowledgement of HR in previous strategic planning processes at the school, but because there has been no one until recently with the accountability, it has probably not received the proper focus it should. So, the strategic planning process is carried out at the school, but strictly, from a HR perspective, it has sort of taken a back seat. It hasn’t had a very high profile”.*

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** This school has a written statement of their mission and values. The major focus is commitment to educational excellence for

the students, which is enabled by creating an environment that fosters personal excellence, an exceptional education, enduring values, character and leadership qualities for students. The statement focuses on education delivery but does not directly address other areas or stakeholders such as employees. As CS1 mentioned, *“Your question notes some other things about strategic objectives. It doesn’t mention a lot of those in that statement”*.

**A dedicated HR Department:** This has been recently set up with the appointment of the HR Manager. Some HR Policies had previously been developed by a now retired staff member. The new HR manager plans to consolidate and build on these and has already developed a mission statement for the HR department because:

*“I thought it was important to let them know what I stood for and what I felt was important on how, for example, HR activities are geared towards achieving the strategic objectives of the school”* (CS1).

This HR manager wants to be more involved in strategic planning; to help the organisation adapt to changes and sees the HR role as helping to:

*“create an environment of an ‘employer of choice’ that recognises, rewards and values its people. Encourage diversity. Work with staff on career development through succession planning, professional development, promotion. Provide administrative expertise, contemporary and effective HR services. Work as partner in strategy execution as well as an employee advocate and promoting cooperation leading to achievement of organisational goals and objectives”*.

On the demographic challenges facing schools in WA, CS1 stated; *“It is part of my job to sell the benefits of the organisation being ready to adapt to these changes”*. Some current teachers are close to retirement and it is hard to get them out of the retirement mindset. However, CS1 believed *“going back to a couple of days a week in a part time kind of capacity might not be a bad thing”*, as it would alleviate some of the shortage problem. In terms of HR building human capacity for strategic initiatives CS1 wanted to focus on *“workforce planning, the employer of choice status, and the reward and recognition systems. ...Some of our teachers have been here for 20, 25, 30 years. From a retention standpoint, (we are) looking at the ageing workforce and what sort of strategies we can put in place to keep some of those people around for a little bit longer”*. Recognition is an important part of this acknowledged *“we are getting a big wall plaque to publish the names of the teachers who have taught here for, say 5 years, 10 years, 15 years. There are a number of honour boards around the place, so, there are a couple of bits and pieces in place, but it needs more work”* (CS1).

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** The human resources policies and procedures need to be updated to achieve alignment and then be communicated to supervisors and leaders in the organisation and CS1 said *“my job now is to share that information with everybody in the organisation”*. This respondent said he still needed to investigate the policies and procedures that were in place, but believed they were designed for practical purposes *“rather than the linkage to the strategies”*.

#### **4.3.2.2 CASE CS2**

Case CS2 is a large independent school with almost 1100 students in combined primary/secondary streams. The two respondents were CS2a, the HR manager, and



CS2b, the principal. A board of management governs the school and the principal manages the school.

**Strategic Planning Process:** The existing strategic plan document for the school was prepared from workshops involving the management team. The next strategic plan is being developed by a committee, with a cross-section of selected participants, including former and existing students. However, the HR manager has not been involved in its development and stated that *“the strategic plan is more about buildings ...I believe that you need to have a strategic plan with goals and targets set for the organisation, and the staff have to be aligned to that in order to reach those goals”*. CS2b partly agreed and argued that, *“because we not part of any systemic structure, our capacity for broad or long-term strategic planning in terms of staffing is necessarily limited....So, it makes it much more difficult to be strategic in what you are doing”*.

CS2a believes the HR manager should be more involved in strategic planning, but admitted, *“HR is new in the independent school system and change is a slow process. So, perhaps we will get there in the end”*. Although the contents of the strategic plan document for CS2 left room for enhancements, there is merit in producing a strategic plan document and communicating it to all staff.

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** A mission statement and strategic objectives existed, but clear alignment of HR objectives with the school’s mission and goals is not very apparent. As CS2a stated, *“I think a lot of that is because HR is so new in education. This is something that is very foreign to them...Now, there are some schools out there...that haven’t even got off the starting blocks, but we have got lots of*

*policies in place.... we are so far advanced. So, for us it is just that strategic part that we really need to get into with the planning”.*

**Dedicated HR Department:** Establishing a HR department was a relatively recent development and the dedicated position of HR officer was set up in 2004, but later changed to HR manager. According to CS2b, *“it is relatively recent in any of the independent schools. We were one of the early ones to appoint a HR person”*. The HR manager’s position was filled by internally promoting one of the Administrative staff who had previously been involved in personnel related tasks in the school.

Two people are employed in the HR department – the manager and HR assistant. There are also a couple of administrative support staff who help with repetitive tasks, such as filing and data processing. There is a Director of Staff position, but this appears to have minimal involvement with the human resources department. The Director of Staff, who has a teaching background, is a preferred member of the management team of the school, rather than the HR manager. CS2b stated:

*“I am of the view that teaching is a quite unique professional activity... a number of the elements relating to teachers really need a teaching background for a full understanding.... for example, at the area of professional development, while I don’t have HR qualifications or experience beyond working in my position, I think I have a good sense of how PD should work; similarly how appraisal of teachers should work. So, I see myself as better placed than a HR manager for the development of those things”.*

The HR department is not involved in the strategic planning process, as the original focus was primarily about *“getting the management of existing systems to a tidy state so that our processes are working effectively and so that we know that we are complying... I have not asked the HR manager to do a great deal in the sense of proposing or suggesting innovations... at the present time our structure is not directed towards our HR manager coming up with strategies or plans”* (CS2b).

The key role of the HR department centres on the routine operational HR responsibilities, with minimal involvement to help the school come up with strategies for managing changing demographics. *“...a major number of our staff are 55 and over...We do have 68% of our staff who are women ... (and this is what concerns me not being involved with the strategic plan), ...So, I think that is a really integral part of looking at your staff planning, your workforce planning, and aligning that to our strategic goals ... from a HR perspective that is a great concern to me. I don’t know whether that has been addressed or how it has been addressed”* (CS2a)

The key current initiative was the development of a Human Resource Information system (HRIS) for the school, to be able to better plan and use the workforce data profiles stored in the system. This will involve HR in determining staffing needs, attracting and retaining manpower to meet current and future demands. Could the profile of HR be raised given the challenges facing CS2? In response to this question CS2a suggested; *“if we can work as a HR network group within the independent schools, we will carry a lot more strength with what we need to do. It is the change process, and change is slow. It is not that easy...hence I think what the challenge will be is to retain the HR people who have got the education knowledge, and*

*keeping them in education. Also ... if you change the position of the principal, you get them onside with the Strategic Human Resource Management. However, there is actually a really long way to go”.*

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** There is no evidence to suggest misalignment between the HR goals and the organisational objectives. The main issue, as already indicated, is the minimal involvement of the HR department in the strategic setting of the objectives – so there could well be downward alignment, but upward alignment is not evident.

#### **4.3.2.3 CASE CS3**

CS3 is a large independent school with about 1200 primary and secondary students. The school is run by an executive team who are responsible for strategic, academic and operational decisions. The director of staff has responsibility for recruitment and HR, and is a member of the executive team, but the HR manager is not. A school council has responsibility for overall governance, sets strategic direction, reviews and monitors plans established by the executive team. The council delegates responsibility for operating the school to the headmaster. CS3 is the HR manager.

**Strategic Planning Process:** A strategic approach to HR management and hence strategic planning is in its early stages in CS3. According to CS3, *“we are working on a Strategic Human Resource Management process here. Very much it is early days for a formal HR structure, and we are developing policies and procedures around our human resources...implementing a lot of the basics for human resource management. But, certainly the principal and the council are very keen to put practices and policies in*

*place that promote development of the teaching staff. How strategic is it? At this point, we are getting there”.*

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The school Mission and values statements exist, but the coverage is limited to students’ learning and development outcomes. From a HR perspective, CS3 stated, *“we have got strategic goals around developing HR policies and practices, skilling up the line managers to deliver a lot of the HR hands-on, and also the whole performance management and recruitment are strategic aims of the HR function here”*. However, these HR objectives are *“probably not formally documented”* (CS3).

**Dedicated HR Department:** The HR organisation reports to the Director of staff. This arrangement *“is different from some of the others, because there is a member of the executive staff who is a teacher....My role is to support him. They wanted somebody who had a teaching background in HR...because I have got a HR background, but not as much education - he and I work together to develop policies and procedures, and develop the whole HR function”* (CS3).

The HR department is relatively new in CS3 and still evolving: *“a lot of the work we have been doing up until now has been kind of behind the scenes, getting policies and procedures ready. Probably over the next 6 to 12 months there will be more visibility as to what the HR department does”* (CS3). The HR roles appear mostly operational in nature and the extension into strategic planning is just beginning. The HR manager’s involvement in strategic planning is limited to providing inputs through the director of staff: *“the HR function has direct input into the executive team which then*

*feeds directly to the school council. ... its role is to research areas and issues that are coming up for the school and present strategies to the executive ... at this early stage, it is probably more operational than strategic” (CS3).*

The role of HR in managing changing trends such as the teacher shortage issues and the teacher ageing demographic, focuses on developing a culture and environment that attracts and retains the best possible teachers. Examples of this include “*structuring the school in a way that teachers can work in a part time environment... we are looking at career options within the school, promotional positions, whether a house head or a curriculum leader or a head of department*” (CS3). Other strategies to help prepare employees to meet current and future needs include the development of an appraisal system and succession planning.

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** The goal of the school is clear - it wants to be one of the leading schools in the private sector. It is therefore intended that HR policies align with this goal.

#### **4.3.2.4 CASE CS4**

CS4 is a large independent school with about 1200 combined primary and secondary students. The governance structure of CS4 includes the College Council and a management team headed by the principal. The management team comprises department heads and the HR manager is a member, who was CS4.

**Strategic Planning Process:** “*We have a College Strategic Plan. We have a Human Resource Strategic Plan or elements of the strategic plan which are particularly human*

*resources focused, and then we have human resource operational plans as well, which I review on an annual basis...we have a College Strategic Plan for the year 2003 - 2010"* confirmed CS4. The school strategic plan document contains the strategic vision, objectives and key activities of the school for the planning period 2003 – 2010. The HR departmental plan for *'2006 and Beyond'* takes its lead from the school strategic plan and contains the plan of HR activities for realising the staff related aspects of the school objectives.

**Mission statement and strategic objectives:** CS4 had clear, written statements of the organisation's vision and strategic objectives for 2003 – 2010. The vision statement covered all aspects of the school's business and included statements for the key stakeholders of teachers, students and the community. Each vision statement has several objectives to be satisfied. CS4 explained:

*"...The vision is, 'The College will attract, select, value and develop the highest calibre staff who support the Christian ethos of the school.... Underneath that there are different objectives. The first one is, 'To recruit and select the right people for the right positions....' The next one is, 'To promote a culture of continuous learning ...to ensure staff are skilled'...'To meet all legal obligations...'...'To promote a working environment whereby staff and management work collaboratively and harmoniously...'; ...'To foster a culture where staff are rewarded...recognised and ultimately retained for their contribution to the college'" (CS4).*

The HR department amongst other functions initiates, develops, implements, manages and reviews systems and strategies in keeping with the school's strategic

objectives and contributes to the strategic planning process. The strategic plan was prepared in 2003 and according to CS4, “...*This year we are setting up a management committee to formally review the strategic plan*”. There is evidence of a linkage between the HR objectives and school goals. These strategic goals and objectives were communicated to all employees when the strategic plan was implemented.

**Dedicated HR Department:** A dedicated HR department was formed in 2002, with a mandate to develop a platform for sound human resource practices and maximise the people capability of the school, as contained in the HR departmental plan. Three HR staff are employed. According to CS4, “*I am part- time, 3 days a week as the human resource manager. ... the human resource officer which is full time, and then we have got an assistant who comes in 1 day a week who does clerical support*”.

As mentioned under strategic planning above, CS4 has a Human Resource departmental plan, compiled from the school’s strategic plan and is in a document entitled ‘*2006 and Beyond*’. The five elements of the HR plan address the staff objectives of the school’s strategic vision. The plan presents actions the HR department is required to carry out. The actions have timeframes and completion targets and measures of success to monitor performance progress.

The HR department supports the school in adapting to changing trends e.g. demographic changes or tightening of market. Another strategic role of HR is to enhance the culture of the school. CS4 said, “*Since I have been here, we haven’t done any kind of cultural audit, nor have we done any formal surveying on employee opinions. ....I want to actually start looking at that aspect of what our culture is now...*



*and then perhaps define cultures for the future”.*

A key initiative by HR to help meet teacher supply needs is to make the school a workplace of choice and this appears in the school recruitment plans. According to CS4, *“...the tight labour market is a really significant issue for us. ... we respond to that by trying to make the school a really attractive workplace ... The school recruits at particular times of the year. Because you are all competing for the same group, a small group of people, we try and get our timing right”.*

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** The HR operational plan derives from the school’s corporate strategic objectives. The activities under each objective of the HR operations plan involve developing enabling HR policies e.g. recruitment and selection, performance, equal opportunity policies, that will guide realisation of the objectives. These policies are therefore vertically aligned with the strategic objectives. On the horizontal integration of policies, CS4 commented *“Before I came, there weren’t any policies. So, I have been building them... as each one is built it is cross-referenced with other policies ... I have just been aware of making sure ...they don’t go off in different directions”.*

#### **4.3.2.5 CASE CS5**

CS5 is a small independent primary school with about 200 students. The school is part of a separate system (based on the philosophy of the founders). CS5 works in the HR group and explained that there are *“two bodies that run the school, the College of Teachers and the Council. The College of Teachers deal with more of the curriculum and the educational side of things and the general day-to-day running of the school, and*

*the Council deal with the larger aspects and financial. They have several sub-groups. The human resources group is one of those sub-groups".* The School Council is comprised of parents and staff, where the work groups of HR, Finance, Marketing, and Administration serve the School Council. While educational issues are the responsibility of the College of Teachers, a Communications Coordinator facilitates communication between the various groups and coordinates their work and the Administration.

**Strategic Planning Process:** Strategic planning is not carried out within Case CS5, as explained by CS5, *"a strategic planning process? I don't think we do"*.

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The school has descriptions of its educational programs and the objectives it intends to achieve. The mission seems clear, with quotes that have been adapted from the philosophical objectives of the founders of the school. According to CS5, the mission statements have been communicated to all members of staff, *"First of all it goes out as a draft and people can make comments. They can come back as a group or they can come back individually. Then, it will go to the council where it is ratified as being acceptable for the whole school, as a mission statement for that group"*.

**Dedicated HR Department:** There is no dedicated HR department and instead a group from different functions forms what they refer to as a human resource group. As CS5 explained,

*"we couldn't say that we are a department, but we are a group. How many employees? We have five, but of course they are not employed. Our chairperson is a volunteer. We have a lot of volunteer input ... I am an HR, and I am the*

*bursar. We have the finance officer on the group ... We have the communications coordinator... Then we have a college representative who is a teacher... we have the council chairperson who is on the group, too, and she has a lot of input in the day-to-day running of the school ... they all have a lot of experience in human resources. We are from different departments and we come together as a human resources group and we meet every week. Sometimes there will be issues about recruitment and new positions ... But, we also meet for issues to do with our staffing” (CS5).*

The HR group is involved with preparing the organisation for changes (such as demographic and labour market changes). According to CS5, *“we try to foresee some of those changes in advance and plan. We do a lot of communication with other people. Sometimes it will be informing people of change so that they are prepared. So, we try to have foresight and make plans”*. Recruitment and professional development are the areas employed to build human capacity. *“We have quite a strict recruitment selection ... We look through the recruitments before we start to advertise. We make the selection criteria before we advertise, so we know what sort of person we want. Then, the interviews are done according to the selection criteria. We look for people who have been trained in the philosophy of the school. When we employ staff we have a professional development program which we set for a year ... The College of Teachers organise at the beginning of the year what the PD will be. Sometimes it is sitting in on another classroom and having a mentor, or going to outside courses, or getting people in” (CS5).*

Other activities that keep staff and teachers happy are culture in the school and appraisal process, although the response from staff on appraisal is mixed:

*“quite often somebody will be coming up for an appraisal or an evaluation, .. Some people will maybe focus on the things that they are not good at or that they are good at... everybody has an evaluation or appraisal each year. I think some of them find it quite confronting, but it is part of their growth and part of their professional development” (CS5).*

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** Vertical alignment and horizontal integration of strategic objectives and policies were not apparent. CS5 explained integration in terms of communication; *“the vertical part is that each month we report to the council. So, the vertical part would be all of the relevant things that we would report, and it would be accepted or not at the council meetings. The horizontal part, with different things that the HR group deals with, they also have to report to other groups. ...So, if we make a decision here, it then also has to go to the other groups” (CS5).*

#### **4.3.2.6 CASE CS6**

CS6 is a large independent, school with about 1100 combined primary and secondary students. The Principal has the executive authority of the College and an overall responsibility for the curriculum, staff, students and the business management of the school. The Principal receives assistance from the Leadership Team of the school, who work with the Principal, operationally and strategically, to achieve the College’s aspiration of being an exemplary, innovative centre of learning - the school of choice. CS6 is the HR manager.

**Strategic Planning Process:** The leadership team along with a Council is responsible for developing the strategic plan and the implementation of these plans in the school. According to CS6, *“The process essentially involves meeting at the beginning of next year. So we will be meeting about February, and when I say ‘we’, it will be the college leadership team and also the college council, also we will have consultants assisting us to basically redefine and actually, settle a strategic plan and also to look at the key performance indicators for the school”*.

The strategic plan, which is a formal document, is renewed annually. HR priorities during the strategic planning process for the next year include issues such as retention and organisational culture. *“Retention is definitely a huge priority, and attracting key staff is definitely a priority...We did an organisational cultural survey, and part of the strategic planning will involve looking at the data from the organisational cultural survey. So organisational culture is one of those internal priorities where we have got to change”* (CS6).

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The primary mission and objectives are summed up in the aspiration ‘to be a school of choice’. The associated purpose and value statements of the school are documented in a little booklet. CS6 said the aim is *“basically to be an exemplary innovative centre of learning, with a number of objectives to enable our students to actually be exemplary and innovative. Quite often you will see also that our other aim is to be a school of choice for students”*.

Although the end goal is for the benefit of students, the strategic objectives covers *“human resources such as introducing best practice human resource policies,...*

*and what we aspire to on the teaching side” (CS6). Responding to the question of communication of the goals / objectives to the employees, CS6 made an interesting confirmatory remark; “that was produced before my time, so I am not sure to what extent it was communicated, but certainly, I guess, people are aware of the strategic goal because I sometimes get it quoted back at me when they have an argument that they want to support”.*

**Dedicated HR Department:** A dedicated HR department exists at Case CS6. There are two employees, the HR manager and HR officer. According to CS6, *“my colleague, the HR officer does a lot more of the HR administration, because I do a lot more of the strategic kind of projects”*. The routine responsibilities of the HR department include control and management of the professional development budget; developing and implementing (in consultation with and obtaining relevant feedback from staff) the development policy; recruitment and appraisal system. The school is very receptive to the idea of implementing HR. CS6 stated that *“before me, there was a department already and the principal was highly committed to the human resource department. I think the college council was very committed to it. The teachers themselves have come to accept it and they see it quite as a natural part of the college. I think that the only thing that really needs to be clarified with them is just exactly what our role is”*.

Examples of some strategies being addressed by HR, according to CS6 include *“the development of an appraisal strategy, how we go about appraising staff, how we go about providing feedback. Another area where we are providing advice is strategy for retention of staff”*. The HR department also helps facilitate the adaptation of the organisation to changes in its external and internal environments. One example was the

need to change organisational culture with respect to accepting a performance management or the appraisal system.

Championing organisational culture change within the school setting is particularly laden with difficulties. According to CS6,

*“for a start we have got to get commitment from the college council ... Organisational change is a painful process and some people may not want to come along, or they may come kicking and screaming... The first thing is commitment on behalf of the organisation and the leadership team that there will be some hard decisions that have to be made as part of organisational change, and then secondly agreeing on what we need to do”.*

What the HR department does to prepare employees for a new change that is coming up *“is communication, and communicating where the college is heading, and to make it clear about what it means for them on a personal level”* (CS6). Relating to accepting a performance management or the appraisal system, CS6 responded that the culture in schools, which is the culture of teachers, is resistant to appraisal:

*“the college had actually tried to implement an appraisal process for the last three years and each time it had been stalled. That was primarily, I think, due to the fact that they were trying to implement appraisal systems that didn’t apply in this industry. It was purely a means of actually just assessing them, which they don’t like. So, this year we introduced a tool for professional learning, in terms of setting goals for professional learning.... It is a very soft appraisal system...”* (CS6).

Another problem Case CS6 also faced was demographic issues. CS6 said:

*“the school has a problem of gender imbalance. ...the ageing issue as well ... the average age is in the 30 to 40 bracket. We have allowed job sharing for a start in some areas. We have had to embrace a lot more part time arrangements than we would actually have liked. We have tried to recruit graduates, new people.... We are looking at enhancing our mentoring system”.*

Some of the initiatives described above are ways the HR department is helping to manage the changes confronting the school and helping build the required human capacity for the future. Additional HR initiatives for building human capacity initiative are in the areas of training and utilising flexible resourcing options to meet staff demands.

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** The respondent acknowledged that there was still room to improve vertical alignment and horizontal integration. CS6 stated, *“I will be the first to admit that we are not mature in the sense of getting that complete vertical alignment... we have got the strategic plan... but in terms of filtering that down, we haven’t been that successful”.*

#### **4.3.2.7 CASE CS7**

Case CS7 is a large private school with about 1200 combined primary/secondary students. The school is a part of the centralised Catholic Education system and controlled by a religious order. CS7 the HR Officer said:

*“There are two types of Catholic schools.... a diocese school, which is governed by the Archbishop of Perth ... and an order-owned school, which is governed by*



*an order - the brothers or a group of sisters. If you are a diocese school, the archbishop is your employer in terms of your contracts and signing off on enterprise bargaining agreement ...and everything goes through CEO [Catholic Education Office] for them. For the order-owned schools, we belong to CEO because we are a Catholic school and we choose to be a party to the enterprise bargaining agreement so that the terms and conditions are covered within our school as well, but we don't have the same level of reporting responsibility to the CEO as what the diocese schools have" ( CS7).*

In terms of flexibility, the order-owned stream appears to have more flexibility than their diocese counterparts in terms of compliance with the CEO's demands.

**Strategic Planning Process:** A strategic planning process exists for CS7. The 2004 – 2008 Strategic Plan document was cited. The five-year strategic plan was facilitated by a consultant and was the result of extensive consultation between staff, students, parents and past students. The HR officer did not participate in the preparation of the strategic plan. Although CS7 admitted that *"there is not too much of it really set up in schools ... There is not really a strategic plan in place for employment and for staffing in teaching areas, because it is so dependent on student numbers ... So, we can't put a lot of things in place in terms of where we would like to go with staffing, because we don't know what our student numbers are going to be"*.

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The vision and mission statements of CS7 are contained in the 2004 to 2008 strategic plan document. Although the statements mainly cover the students' education and their all round development, the key

objectives cover different aspects of the school business, including HR management. Examples include the need to appoint an HR Administration Officer in 2005; the initiative to introduce a staff performance management process in 2006.

CS7 stated that the mission and vision statements are also presented in the staff handbook which goes out to the staff every year and that the statements are very much linked back to the philosophy of the founding order. Being a Catholic school has, “*a very strong influence through the school. Everything that is done in school is done with the vision and your mission underpinning it ... even down to what I would term basic HR issues like a payroll issue....*” (CS7).

**Dedicated HR Department:** The HR department is comprised of one staff and was created in January 2005. “*... I am the HR department. I work with everyone, with the principal ... I am working with staff; I work with the head of learning areas, too. If they have got a staffing issue, they would talk to the principal, but they usually also come and use me as a bit of a sounding board as well*” (CS7).

The HR officer has a HR degree and has no dealings with students. The main responsibilities are payroll, superannuation, employee contract preparation, recording professional development, management of inductions, and the recruitment process. The HR Officer does not directly get involved in strategic planning. The activities undertaken are mainly operational aspects of HR however, HR is involved in activities that help adapt the school to changes. Embracing e-recruitment was one area that CS7 felt warranted more HR intervention. According to CS7, “*if you look at recruitment, obviously you try and go along the path of advertising through the Internet, because*

*people are starting to use that more and more. We are not doing that at the moment. It is something that I have suggested". Ageing of the workforce was another potential issue that needed monitoring: "looking at the age range of our teaching staff, we did a calculation last year and the median age was about 43 or 45 years old" (CS7).*

Key HR initiatives being used for building human capacity include the use of appropriate reward schemes. According to CS7, *"depending on what it is we are asking them (teachers) to do. If they take on additional responsibility, like they are head of year, head of learning area etc, then their teaching load is reduced ... there are lots of really little things - if somebody goes out of their way to do something, the principal gives them a bottle of wine and says, 'Thank you'"*.

An area of concern is the teacher/student ratio and the school tries to get this right. According to CS7, *"a lot of it will come down to what student subject selection is, especially for the elective subjects ... we really just look at where subject selection is going and where to increase"* thus highlighting how difficult it is to plan for the areas of need, such as Mathematics and Science teachers. CS7 stressed that to address these, *"... we offer a lot of professional development opportunities to the staff to be able to expand their teaching areas... We also trade on the fact that we have got a very good reputation as a school, a very good name as a school, and you get a lot of people applying for that reason"*.

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** On vertical alignment / horizontal integration, CS7 stated the alignment with CEO demands is one area satisfying the vertical fit. For example, Case CS7 has no control over the level of salary because the CEO sets it.

Similarly, the CEO sets the limit on how to spend on professional development, such as the 5 days of professional development per year for staff.

#### **4.3.2.8 CASE CS8**

Case CS8 is a large private school with about 1100 combined primary/secondary students. The school is a part of the centralised Catholic Education system under the order-owned type. The school is governed by a Board and a College Leadership Team that is made up of the Headmaster and College Deans. CS8 is the HR officer, who sits on the school leadership team, but reports through one of the college deans.

**Strategic Planning Process:** A strategic planning process exists in Case CS8, although a strategic plan document was not cited. According to CS8, *“the planning is more in policies... So you need to have a plan and have procedures and policies on all the different aspects of human resource involvement within a school... it is the board who actually arrange that and does that, and I carry it out...all the plans and advertising – employment, recruitment, and retaining our staff”*.

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The vision and mission of CS8 focus on providing holistic education to the students in a caring and stimulating environment, whilst upholding the Catholic ethos and embracing the beliefs and practices of the founders. The mission statement also shows that the school is dedicated to attracting and retaining qualified, skilled and committed staff.

CS8 added that the *“human resources ... [functions come under] ... the vision and the mission of the school. We have written recruitment policies.... We have*

*performance management for our teachers as well as all our other staff, and we do performance appraisal each year. We have professional development of each individual. So we have those procedures, and I obviously have to work within them”.*

**Dedicated HR Department:** The HR department was set up in 2002, as CS8 mentioned, *“I’ve only been here at the school for four years, but the school changed ... it is important that colleges and schools do have human resources and get away from the registrar-cum-bursar type positions, because it involves a lot more than what just the bursar and the registrar do. [This school] was probably one of the first to employ HR ... it is a very important thing in this day and age, you need to look after your duty of care to your staff members as well as to the students”.*

The HR Officer does not directly participate in strategic planning and objective setting, but provides needed inputs, such as data to help long term manpower planning and guidance so the right HR processes are followed, *“...no one can come and say that you haven’t followed the process or you haven’t done this. I am the one that has to make sure that everything is done as per our procedures and policies”* (CS8).

How does the HR officer assist the organisation deal with changes, such as the tight labour market, demographic issues, ageing population? CS8 responded that there was the need for networking amongst HR managers/officers in schools. *“... I meet each month with all the other HR members from the other colleges, and you all thrash around your ideas and policies. We all check with each other on what is happening, where the schools are going, and what sort of an input HR can have...”* (CS8). Succession planning is in place but is being coordinated by the different department

heads rather than centrally by the HR department. This includes other strategies for staff retention, and some professional development for some of the younger teachers. Another area is equal opportunity strategies that ensure women are not discriminated against. CS8 stated, *“we do have 32 per cent women here as teachers which is quite (good), because one of our policies is that you employ people on ability and not on gender”*.

Improvements in the areas of performance appraisal, an appropriate reward scheme and professional development are initiatives that HR is considering for building human capacity. *“...we are in the process of doing performance appraisals so that it is fair and even across... This will be done on all the teachers... I just think positive appraisal or positive feedback is often the best reward that you can give someone. One of the other areas [is] ... professional development which .... [could] be something that is personal ...or ... professional development within their teaching skills”* (CS8).

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** CS8’s response to the question was *“they are aligned with the mission of the school ... it would be pointless having a mission statement and then not working towards what that mission statement was”*. In relation to horizontal integration of the policies, CS8 said the school policies/procedures, *“while standing alone, they do work in harmony with each other ... [they] actually work together, separately, but together”*.

#### **4.3.2.9 CASE CS9**

Case CS9 is a medium private primary school with about 400 students and is part of the centralised Catholic Education system. Case CS9 has a Leadership Team and a School

Board. According to CS9 who was the school principal, the *“leadership team is me and my two deputies who meet regularly”* and the school board *“makes decisions; any financial decisions, that are significant that will enhance the school environment. For example, we built a huge undercover area a couple of years ago. That was a decision by the school board... We upgraded the library and computer area...”* (CS9).

The School Board is comprised of Parents, the Principal and the Parish Priest. Its role is to ensure the school remains financially sound and achieves this goal by supervising both the periodic and annual expenditure of funds that are related to curriculum issues and programs operating in the school. The affiliation of Case CS9 with the Catholic Education means that *“the Catholic Education Office allocates our money... based on how many children we have, based on our socio-economic status.... They can mandate that this particular policy has to go into place..., i.e. policies ...about senior teachers, assistant principals, enrolment policy, [etc]”* (CS9).

**Strategic Planning Process:** Although a strategic plan document was not provided, the school did work to a strategic objective. CS9 said *“I think you would find that most Catholic schools have what is called a strategic plan, ... as to what their goals are for the children, what their goals are for the staff, what their goals are for the parents, and that sort of thing”*.

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The vision statement in Case CS9 prescribes building a collaborative learning community where people reflect a love of God and a love of others. The sub - statements or objectives cover the different aspects of the school business from student management, to ensuring effective communication

and positive relationships amongst staff. The vision statements and associated objectives are well communicated to staff. CS9 said, *“we refer to it quite regularly at our staff meetings ...It is also displayed quite prominently in our staff room... So, we are constantly being reminded”*.

**Dedicated HR Department:** There is no dedicated HR department in Case CS9. The leadership team discusses and handles all staff matters. Some of the HR functions being promoted, include *“Team building activities, Recognition of milestones and achievements, Staff Social Club events and other organised get-togethers, Professional Development for individuals, including opportunities for faith development”* (CS9).

No formal appraisal and performance management system is in place. The principal, said, *“I do spend a lot of time in and out of the classrooms. So, I have got a fair idea of what is going on ... the only time I would do an appraisal is if I was unhappy with a teacher. Informally, I will tell the teachers, ‘Look, I am not sure that I like that going on’, I could sit down in a classroom for a couple of hours and watch the teacher work”*.

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** There are a number of policies within Case CS9; some are school based and others are from the Catholic Education Office. The school policies align with the goals of the Catholic Education system and the school is obliged to comply. For instance, *“(The Catholic Education Office) set a limit on how much you can spend on professional development ... they nominate ... 5 days of professional development per year for the whole staff ... (Also) we have got some guidelines from the Catholic Education Office ... on the requirements for staff progression and reward ... I*



*have no choice, because it is set by the Catholic Education Office” (CS9).*

#### **4.3.2.10 CASE CS10**

Case CS10 respondents were drawn from the Western Australian Department of Education and Training [WADET] and this Case represents the public primary and secondary schools under the management of the department. Public schools range in size from very small to very large and the total number of students in this sector is around 211,100. In terms of governance, the public schools come under the WADET centralised system. CS10a, CS10b and CS10c represent an HR manager and two directors - Corporate central office and Regional Directors respectively. According to CS10b, it is important to appreciate the governance structure in place in education in Western Australia,

*“because we run a paradigm unlike other education systems. ...if you look at Victoria, New Zealand, UK, they have got what used to be called local management of schools which gives the school their own governance structure, and their own autonomy in terms of financial and management control. That model doesn’t exist in Western Australia. So, the schools don’t have governing bodies. They have school councils, but they are not recognised through legislation ... the schools are not very autonomous (independent units) and therefore Strategic HR Management is run very much from the centre and not at the school level or at the district level” (CS10b).*

The district office has some HR management responsibilities, but it is not strategic. The roles include certain human resource management areas, financial management and student performance associated with the district operation, but the

management of the staffing is based on centrally allocated resources. There are currently no plans to fully devolve HR management away from the centre.

**Strategic Planning Process:** An established strategic planning process exists within Case CS10. This: *“process is driven centrally by the executive area. There is an area that sort of supports the executive core policy and planning”* (CS10a). CS10b confirmed that *“it is very much the central office that has that area of responsibility”*, whilst CS10c added specifically, that for the districts, there are no separate *“priorities for this district, but the same priorities for the system, so, the (central) plan for government schools is really our district plan as well ...we would follow the plan that was established by the central processes”*.

The current strategic plan for government schools is contained in the 2004 - 2007 document. Although this is completed centrally, CS10a explained the process involves *“an extensive consultation process with districts ... professional associations, and with central office.... So, [there] is an opportunity for schools to feed through, either (through) their professional associations or through the district structure, into that plan”*.

CS10b further explained that *“in terms of planning, we work to ‘The Plan for Government Schools’. That is the overarching strategic document for the Department. Underneath that document sits a HR plan .... Then, underneath the HR plan lays various operational plans. So, that is like the planners’ hierarchy”*. On the review cycle for strategic planning, CS10c said, *“we constantly review our directions on a yearly basis, but the government plan for schools is a three-year plan. It is about to be*

*released again in the end of term four for 2007, and we will review our district plan in line with that plan. So, it tends to be a three-year plan, but with regular review periods”.*

**Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives:** The vision for government schools in Western Australia is clear. The goal is for all students to achieve highest standards of learning possible so that they are equipped to deal effectively with the opportunities and challenges that they encounter in a changing world. The vision calls for motivated and capable teachers and school leaders who feel valued and supported in their work and thus its statements cover the main aspects of the public school business, from achieving students’ learning outcomes to having a motivated teaching workforce. The local school sites and districts do not have their own strategic plan.

Case CS10 thus relies on effective communication to transmit its strategic objectives from the centre, which according to CS10a *“is an issue in a large bureaucracy like this”*. Explaining the communication challenges and context, CS10b stated, *“we put a lot of reliance on the Internet and Intranet ... on ... ‘edemail’ which is a general fax stream that we send out to all schools. We provide a regular newspaper called School Matters. We use districts as a conduit in terms of getting information out. Central office runs lots and lots of professional development, and various other ways of communicating with schools directly”*. Although the need for communication is ever more demanding, according to CS10b, there appears to be *“massive overload in schools. So, our Director General is really conscious of too much information going out to schools; directives, guidelines, policies, procedures, instructions!”*

**Dedicated HR Department:** The HR and professional learning directorate within DET comprises several areas, namely staffing, labour relations, strategic human resources, a professional learning institute, and complaints management (which is currently being renamed internal assurance), and professional standards. As HR management is carried out centrally, the principals and district directors provide the link between the local school / district sites and the central HR organisation. Further clarification on the central-local relationships was provided by CS10a:

*“we run a highly devolved sort of model in many ways. There are highly devolved components, but highly centralised components. So, in terms of how individual schools are managed, that is very much under the direction of the principal. ... the principal under the School Education Act is the one who defines how a school should carry out its business. They are the responsible officer ... Obviously the principal has to act in accordance with the Department’s policies” (CS10a).*

The Director of Human Resources and Professional Learning has primary responsibility for Strategic HR Management, according to CS10b, *“...Strategic HR is translated into workforce management, workforce development, workforce planning, and equity and diversity”*. Some examples of key HR strategies, according to CS10a relate to *“attraction of graduate teachers, the deployment of staff either through centralised transfer or through recruitment and selection”*.

Although HR or HR department is involved in helping DET adapt to environmental changes, it has to respond to the cultural setting of the organisation, which is influenced by factors such as geographical spread and the age of the teaching

population. CS10a described the situation as follows;

*“it is important to understand the culture of schools. Now, I think geography is a major factor within WA. You have got very, very isolated schools, and then you have got metropolitan large, kind of urban high schools as well...[also]... the age profile of the workforce is different depending on whether you are in the metropolitan area or in some of the regional areas. The metropolitan area’s workforce would be older, but in a lot of the regional areas you would have a much younger workforce, because that is where people go when they graduate ... That is how they get promoted” (CS10a).*

The use of the right strategies by HR is important; for example, CS10a said, *“...workforce planning function [should consider] the four generations that we are dealing with, veterans, baby boomers, generation X and generation Y, the profiles of those different generations affect the kinds of policies that you have in place”*. To address these differences, CS10b mentioned, *“...we have various sources of information; demographics, wellbeing surveys, exit surveys, information in relation to pay, conditions of employment, health and safety issues.... there is a whole wealth of data which is provided to us and we have to work our way through those issues and that information, and work out where we are going to put our energies”*.

Workforce planning, flexibility for local recruitment and professional development are the main initiatives being employed to build human capacity for the future as explained in the following response. CS10a said, *“in terms of the workforce planning function, there is a fairly detailed examination of future staffing needs by learning areas ... We look at retirement, so exit rate ... we know that the rate of*

*retirement is increasing obviously due to the ageing workforce”.*

Sometimes local recruitment is employed to fill some local school or district vacancies because this is a faster route than the central process. CS10c acknowledged that *“some of my principals are recruited through a central process...Some are selected at the local level where I would advertise the position and then go through the same selection process. That usually depends if it is a short term or long term vacancy, or whether it is a substantive vacancy. So, if it is a substantive vacancy, it usually goes through a central process”.*

Professional development of teachers is helping to build human capacity for future job needs. According to CS10c *“... 80% of our function would be the professional development or professional learning of teachers. So, in all areas they would get access; access not just to people at the district level, but we bring people in from Perth as well ... also we have video conference facilities ... and we have trialed facilities such as e-learning facilities where the teachers are actually online”.*

Performance management, appraisal and appropriate rewards are also used to support the building of human capacity. The district director does the performance management of principals, with the principal performance-managing or appraising the teachers using the Department’s central process. Finding the right level or type of reward is difficult says CS10c, *“...warm feedback and constructive feedback ... a strong professional relationship, both (being) intrinsically and extrinsically rewarded ...giving some sort of acknowledgement”* can go a long way to keep teachers motivated.

**Vertical and Horizontal Alignment:** From the responses above, the HR policies in place within Case CS10 take their sources from the corporate organisation's missions and strategic objectives to achieve vertical alignment.

### 4.3.3 Status of SHRM Implementation: Cross-Case Analysis

The previous subsection has provided detailed descriptions of the status of SHRM in each of the ten Case study sites. This subsection presents the findings of a cross - analysis of the ten cases. Tables 4.8 to 4.11 show the Cross - case analysis results using a meta-matrix order, according to the extent or degree of evidence against each of the four requirements of SHRM: namely, having a strategic planning process, a mission statement and strategic objectives, a dedicated HR department, and vertical and horizontal alignment in each site.

Table 4.8: Evidence of Strategic Planning Process

Strong evidence	Moderate evidence	Weak evidence
<b>Strategic planning process</b>		
<b>5 Cases</b>	<b>2 Cases</b>	<b>3 Cases</b>
CS2, 4, 6, 7 & 10 undertake strategic planning.  CS2 & 6 plan updated annually.  CS2: Cross sectional management, staff and students committee prepare plan.  CS4: 2003 to 2010 plan prepared by Management team and HR manager.  CS6: School leadership team prepares plan.  CS7: 2004-2008 plan prepared in consultation with management, staff and students.	CS1 & 8 undertake strategic planning. Timeframe undefined.  CS1: Executive team prepares plan.  CS8: Leadership team prepares plan.	CS3: No Strategic plan, but are developing HR policies & procedures.  CS5 & 9: No evidence of formal strategic planning.

CS10: 2004 – 2007 plan prepared by Central Office. Districts and local schools depend on Central plan.		
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As shown in Table 4.8, three levels were assigned to each criterion to demonstrate if there was strong, moderate or weak evidence of each requirement in place. Strong evidence of strategic planning occurred where a site had a strategic planning process and a defined timeframe for the plan. If there was absence of a defined time frame, the evidence was downgraded to moderate and, if there was some form of planning, albeit not as a formal process, subsequently to weak..

Table 4.9: Evidence of Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives

<b>Strong evidence</b>	<b>Moderate evidence</b>	<b>Weak evidence</b>
<b>Mission statement and strategic objectives</b>		
<b>6 Cases</b>	<b>4 Cases</b>	
CS4, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10 have clear written statements covering business aspects and staff.  CS7, 8 & 9 include commitment to religious philosophies.  CS10 includes staff motivation, but is a centralised policy, reliant on effective communication for implementation in schools.	CS1, 2, 3 & 5 have written statements but focus on educational excellence for students, without acknowledging teachers as key stakeholders.  CS3 plans to extend this to include staff.	

As shown in Table 4.9, strong Evidence of Mission statement and strategic objectives occurred if the sites had clear written statements covering all aspects of the school business and objectives or strategies that recognised teaching staff as important stakeholders. Where there was no reference to teachers, the evidence was downgraded to a moderate one.



The existence of an HR manager / officer as part of the school management team and who undertook, not just operational HR, but had strategic functions, including involvement in the strategic planning process, was deemed strong evidence. Moderate evidence occurred if the HR department did not undertake strategic responsibilities, whilst weak evidence was if there was no dedicated HR department and HR duties were performed by others such as a school principal. The results are shown in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Evidence of Dedicated HR Department

<b>Strong evidence</b>	<b>Moderate evidence</b>	<b>Weak evidence</b>
<b>Dedicated HR department</b>		
<b>3 Cases</b>	<b>5 Cases</b>	<b>2 cases</b>
CS4 & 6: HR employs 3 and 2 people respectively. HR managers on executive team. HR implemented strategically and operationally. Proactive to address tight labour market shortages and motivation.  CS10 has a large and centralised HR department, where district directors and principals provide the link to schools.	CS1, 2, 3, 7 & 8 have HR Managers / Officers, who report to Staff Directors. HR is involved in operational HR and planning.  CS2 is seeking to deploy HRIS to aid planning.  CS7 & 8 have an HR officer who is not part of the executive or involved in strategic planning. The roles deal with routine operational HR responsibilities though aim to improve HR planning.	CS5 & 9 do not have dedicated HR staff and HR functions are managed by the leadership teams.

In terms of vertical and horizontal alignment, strong evidence was observed in a site where there was a clear link between HR policies and the mission-based objectives of the organisation and where the HR procedures worked in harmony with each other for horizontal integration. The resulting evidence for vertical and horizontal alignment is shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Evidence of Vertical and Horizontal Alignment

<b>Strong evidence</b>	<b>Moderate evidence</b>	<b>Weak evidence</b>
<b>Vertical and horizontal alignment</b>		
<b>3 Cases</b>	<b>5 Cases</b>	<b>2 Cases</b>
CS4, 8 & 10 have HR policies vertically and horizontally aligned with the strategic objectives. Procedures work in harmony with each other for horizontal integration.	CS1, 2 & 6: HR policies and procedures meet operational HR requirements. Working to enhance vertical alignment with strategic objectives.  CS7 & 9: HR procedures are vertically aligned with central Office objectives and policies. No evidence of horizontal integration.	CS3: HR policies are under development, and aimed at alignment.  CS5 has no apparent vertical alignment. Decisions based on school philosophy.

Table 4.12: Composite Evidence of All SHRM Requirements

Case Study Composite SHRM Evidence Matrix							
	Strategic planning process	Mission statement / strategic objectives	Dedicated HR department	Vertical / horizontal alignment	Total Scores	Average Scores	Extent of SHRM Evidence
CS01	2	2	2	2	8	2.0	Moderate
CS02	3	2	2	2	9	2.3	Moderate
CS03	1	2	2	1	6	1.5	Moderate
CS04	3	3	3	3	12	3.0	Strong
CS05	1	2	1	1	5	1.3	Weak
CS06	3	3	3	2	11	2.8	Strong
CS07	3	3	2	2	10	2.5	Strong
CS08	2	3	2	3	10	2.5	Strong
CS09	1	3	1	2	7	1.8	Moderate
CS10	3	3	3	3	12	3.0	Strong
Legends:	Composite Score: Weak Extent = < 1.5 Moderate Extent = or > 1.5, but < 2.5 Strong Evidence = or > 2.5						

Tables 4.8 – 4.11 show the degree of each requirement for SHRM, but not the extent of SHRM evidence at each case study site. The latter has been estimated using mathematical averages, as shown in Table 4.12. Scores of 1, 2 and 3 represented evidence of each SHRM requirement (i.e. weak, moderate or strong evidence respectively). The total score for each site was then computed to make up composite

scores. From Table 4.12, five out of the ten case study sites showed a strong evidence of SHRM uptake, four showed moderate evidence and the last case had a weak evidence of SHRM uptake.

#### 4.3.4 Summary of Case Study A Findings

Table 4.13 presents a summary of the status of implementation of SHRM in the ten case study sites investigated based on the degree of evidence found against the four criteria for determining the existence of SHRM in an organisation. The table also lists the sectors of the participating school organisations, their locations and demographics. A traffic light system has been applied to the table to improve visual differentiation. The table thus provides an overall summary of the findings from Case Study A which investigated the extent to which the SHRM approach was in place in schools.

Table 4.13: Summary of Status of SHRM Implementation

Summary of Status of Implementation of SHRM								
Case Study Code	Sector	Location	Evidence of Individual SHRM Requirements				Extent of SHRM in Place	Case Study Site
			Strategic planning process	Mission statement / strategic objectives	Dedicated HR department	Vertical / horizontal alignment		
CS1	Independent	Metropolitan	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS2		Metropolitan	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS3		Metropolitan	Weak	Moderate	Moderate	Weak	Moderate	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS4		Metropolitan	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS5		Metropolitan	Weak	Moderate	Weak	Weak	Weak	Small Primary School
CS6		Metropolitan	Strong	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS7	Catholic	Metropolitan	Strong	Strong	Moderate	Moderate	Strong	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS8		Metropolitan	Moderate	Strong	Moderate	Strong	Strong	Large Combined Primary / Secondary School
CS9		Metropolitan	Weak	Strong	Weak	Moderate	Moderate	Medium Primary School
CS10	Public	Metropolitan	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Strong	Public Primary / Secondary Schools

## **4.4 Case Study B Findings: Strategies for Teacher Attraction and Retention**

**Case Study B: A case study of how the strategic application of human resource factors positively influence teacher attraction and retention in WA schools.**

This section reports the findings from the multiple methods employed to answer the second research question, namely *‘are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?’*. Case Study B focuses on strategies to attract and retain teachers. The findings are drawn from three separate data collection methods, namely; the ten multi-site in-depth interviews, an electronic in-depth interview of retired teachers and an electronic survey of serving school teachers.

### **4.4.1 Findings from Ten Multi-Site In-depth Interviews**

The same thirteen participants from the ten case study sites (coded Case CS1 to Case CS10) reported in Case study A (see section 4.3.1) participated in answering the main Research Question 2. The in-depth interviews involved six (6) questions. These questions are explained below:

1. **What are the teacher attraction and retention problems?** This question examined the extent of the problem of attracting and retaining adequate numbers of quality teaching staff.
2. **Are the current HR practices to attract and retain teachers working?** This question examined the adequacy and effectiveness of current human resource

management practices within the school sector in helping to attract and retain teachers.

3. **Are teachers considered important for competitive advantage?** This question investigated the importance of teachers as a source of competitive advantage and examined the inclusion of teacher shortage problems in the organisation's strategic objectives.
4. **What are the implications of SHRM approach to teacher attraction / retention?** This question examined the implications of the SHRM approach for influencing teacher attraction / retention, i.e. what trade-offs are required to be made to achieve successful outcomes.
5. **What strategies are recommended for general teacher attraction / retention?** This question identified human resource management practices that might improve general teacher attraction and retention problems.
6. **What strategies are recommended for early career teachers?** This question identified human resource management practices that might improve retention of early Career teachers.

#### **4.4.1.1 Teacher attraction and retention problems**

Table 4.14 summarises the findings on the extent of the problem of attracting and retaining adequate numbers of quality teaching staff in the different case study sites from Case CS1 to Case CS10. From the table, the public sector experiences major attraction and retention problems in regional/remote locations, but moderate in metropolitan schools. The catholic and independent sectors experience minor to moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.

Table 4.14: Extent of Teacher Shortage Problem

Cases	Issues	Extent of Problem
CS1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Relies on good reputation (students' performance, positive publicity, branding) for attracting people.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Relies on effective recruitment (validation, interviewing, reference checking, mock lessons) to ensure the right one is chosen.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences minor teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Relies on attractive school/working conditions (metropolitan location, competitive salary structure, good leave, good PD and support) to get and keep staff.</li> </ul>	Minor
CS4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Suffers from shortage in Maths, Science, English, Music and female gender bias.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Suffers from shortage of full time teachers and female gender bias. Relies on special training of teachers in the school philosophy to retain them.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences minor teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Relies on its good reputation (students' performance, positive publicity, branding) for attracting people.</li> </ul>	Minor
CS7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Suffers from shortage in Maths, Science, English, Music and female gender bias.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences moderate teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Relies on good reputation (students' performance, positive publicity, branding) for attracting people.</li> <li>Suffers from shortage in Maths, Science, English, Music and female gender bias.</li> <li>Relies on attractive school/working conditions (location, ethos and vision and caring workplace) to keep staff.</li> </ul>	Moderate
CS9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences minor teacher attraction and retention problems.</li> <li>Able to get and keep good quality teachers given school metropolitan location.</li> </ul>	Minor
CS10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Experiences major attraction and retention problem in regional/remote locations, but moderate in metropolitan schools.</li> <li>Areas of teacher shortage are secondary subjects - Maths, Science, Design Technology, LOTE and female gender bias in primary schools.</li> <li>Booming mining industry worsening the problem in the North Pilbara/Kimberley.</li> <li>Ageing teaching population an issue in metropolitan schools.</li> </ul>	Major

#### 4.4.1.2 Current HR practices to attract and retain teachers

The findings on current human resource management strategies within the school sector and their adequacy or effectiveness in helping to attract and retain teachers are summarised by sector below.

**Independent:** The large independent schools indicated they work towards implementing ‘employer of choice’ strategies to make them attractive employers. Some of their strategies include:

- competitive remuneration strategies including a salary structure that is above the public and catholic sectors, promotional positions for teachers which allow them to remain in classrooms, but take on additional responsibilities with extra pay, e.g. head of department, subject or activity coordinators, head of year, etc.
- flexible working conditions, e.g. generous parenting leave, flexible leave arrangements, financial support for further studies such as teachers undertaking masters or doctorates.
- professional development support and opportunities.
- High standards of working environment that include beautiful working environment, staff amenities, metropolitan location and other miscellaneous benefits such as a shoulder massage for teachers involved in large report writing.

The smaller independent schools tend to rely on the communal atmosphere in the school and teachers intrinsic characteristics being aligned to the schools’ philosophy, as key strategies for supporting attraction and retention.

**Catholic:** The large catholic schools depend on similar strategies to the large independent schools. They recognise that the recent development of human resource management roles in schools should help. They also tend to rely on teachers intrinsic characteristics being aligned to the Catholic ethos and philosophy, as key strategies for helping attraction and retention. Both the larger and smaller schools rely on this alignment of teacher’s intrinsic characteristics and the Catholic ethos and philosophy as

important. They also depend on the positive atmosphere and camaraderie in the school to keep their staff.

**Public:** The government schools employ several strategies. These include the 'Job for life concept', \$40,000 scholarships, recruitment officers, job fairs, marketing strategies, a \$15,000 regional allowance, and promise of position in the city after accepting posting to and working in remote areas as attraction and retention strategies.

The respondents confirmed that the above strategies seem to be helping teacher attraction/retention in the schools. However, the persistence of teacher shortage issues confirmed that there is room for improvement.

#### **4.4.1.3 Importance of teachers for competitive advantage**

All the case study sites acknowledged the importance of teachers as a source of competitive advantage to their schools over other schools or sectors.

#### **4.4.1.4 Implication of SHRM approach to teacher attraction / retention**

All respondents believed the implementation of SHRM would help bring about positive influences on teacher attraction / retention. Their opinion was that the SHRM approach has its implications for developing and implementing changed strategies for it to be successful. Organisations should be willing to make some concessions such as:

- Willingness to make new policies that back up strategies to improve attraction / retention.
- Willingness to alter existing HR policies and strategies to improve teacher attraction / retention.



- Willingness to increase the involvement of HR in staff issues and strategies, including the involvement of HR in supporting teachers and leaders to maintain a culture that improves attraction and retention.
- Willingness to develop holistic strategies involving HR, line management and other specialists for achieving improved retention and attraction.
- Willingness to make trade-offs between traditionally preferred options and business alternatives to achieve the goal of attraction / retention. For example, when recruiting teachers, strategic selection (i.e. getting the right person for the position and the school) may entail choosing a person whose qualities are aligned with the school ethos, rather than the person without the requisite qualities.

#### 4.4.1.5 Strategies for general teacher attraction / retention

The identified human resource management practices that might improve general teacher attraction and retention problems are tabulated in Table 4.15.

Table 4.15: Strategies to Improve General Attraction / Retention

S/No	Merged Findings	Source Cases
<b>Appraisal and performance management strategies</b>		
1.	Implement a formalised annual appraisal process that is goal-based and achievement-based with professional development components as well. The process should be based on very specific substantiation, rather than one that produces fuzzy generalities.	CS1, CS2
2.	Appraisal systems should not only check staff performance, but should include self reflection for the organisation by identifying whether their structures are correct, whether their procedures help staff achieve their targets.	CS2
3.	Implement fit for purpose appraisal for small schools, possibly informally, but address all key performance and development issues.	CS9
<b>Recruitment and selection strategies</b>		
4.	Implement selection criteria that identify people who are attracted to the profession because of non-monetary reasons e.g. lifestyle, prefer working with children and do not make the entry bar very high for them, i.e. allow people into the profession who are not necessarily	CS4

S/No	Merged Findings	Source Cases
	the brightest, but who possess the right qualities.	
5.	Implement more flexible arrangements with employment agreements enabling schools to respond to areas of teachers shortage.	CS6
6.	Conduct more effective exit interviews (utilising HR staff) to find out why people are leaving the profession / workforce so that the issues can be addressed.	CS7
<b>Reward system strategies</b>		
7.	Improve the pay to make it competitive, teaching needs to be a better paid profession.	CS4
8.	Implement changes to the superannuation laws to encourage people to stay longer, i.e. people are not going to be retiring so early.	CS10
<b>Training and development strategies</b>		
9.	Employ HR professionals to develop (with input from other related disciplines e.g. Psychology) suitable employee attraction and retention strategies for the executive management group to consider and then coach the line managers/department heads about how they can be implemented.	CS1
10.	Implement strategic bottom-up PD planning which involves engaging the different department heads (and HR). Prepare appropriate PD to achieve particular aims for the year, including more individualised PD geared to the teachers' particular work needs or areas that they are interested in e.g. their subject area and other accreditations e.g. leadership and other special needs.	CS2, CS5 and CS7
<b>School conditions strategies</b>		
11.	Implement increased flexibility in work options enabling schools to respond to areas of teacher shortage e.g. part-time arrangements or job share working arrangements to allow older staff to gradually reduce their hours in advance of retirement and thereby extend their working life; offering more part time work for the mothers that have left the workforce to have kids.	CS1, CS7 and CS10
12.	Implement strategy for attraction based on being an attractive employer of choice. Includes creating a more personal school environment with communal support e.g. spend money on improving facilities, provide a social club and improved social interaction, encourage camaraderie between the staff for simple things like celebrating teachers birthdays during a morning tea at the end of each month.	CS2, CS5 and CS9
13.	Conduct a state-wide review of teachers' workloads and consider reducing the teaching load that some teachers have so they have got more time to do their other work with the classes - teachers may not seem overloaded, but they do a lot of work, especially at particular times of the year like at report times. Then they are just working non-stop to get things done. In addition, some teach up to six periods each day.	CS7
<b>Strategies for remote and rural regions</b>		
14.	Devise ingenious and creative ways to attract older staff - the grey army of teachers near or in retirement. E.g. in the Northern Territory, the strategy is to encourage the grey army to work for 6 months to a year as part of their around Australia travels. They will be encouraged to bring their campervan, park it in a rural location where they can have fun teaching in remote schools, thereby dealing with remote schools attraction and retention through short term contracts targeted	CS10

S/No	Merged Findings	Source Cases
15.	at older teachers.  Develop principals, district directors and key central office leaders with personal relationship - building skills to enable them support teachers in remote areas so the teachers do not see themselves as alienated from the central organisation.	CS10
<b>Other Strategies</b>		
16.	Develop a Network under a new interest group of HR specific to the education industry. HR managers from different schools could meet on a regular basis to share ideas on strategies for attraction / retention.	CS1

#### 4.4.1.6 Strategies for early career teachers:

The identified human resource management practices that might improve retention of early career teachers are listed in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Strategies to Improve Attraction / Retention of Early Career Teachers

S/No	Merged Findings	Source Cases
<b>Appraisal and performance management strategies</b>		
1.	Provide support via special performance and appraisal process to help them reflect on how they are going, so that there is regular feedback. Also, giving them access to senior teachers if they need help.	CS3 and CS4
<b>Recruitment and selection strategies</b>		
2.	Apply suitable strategies that identify and address the generation Y characteristics of young teachers.	CS1 and 2
3.	Award scholarship programs to attract students in Maths and Science areas.	CS10
<b>Reward system strategies</b>		
4.	Award financial incentives to encourage career change into teaching from, for example, engineering, accounting or commerce.	CS10
5.	Award financial incentives for graduates in the areas of shortages e.g. Maths and Science graduates, cost of living allowance, accommodation in remote/regional areas.	CS10 and CS9
<b>Training and development strategies</b>		
6.	Support higher degree studies that are relevant to their teaching or subject area.	CS2
7.	Implement effective graduate mentoring programs and professional development modules that will support graduates during their first year.	CS3, 4, 6, 9 and 10
8.	Implement an extensive induction program to increase awareness of the demands of teaching e.g. WACOT beginning teacher seminar. Include local school induction covering the history, the basic practices in the school, etc.	CS7, 9

S/No	Merged Findings	Source Cases
<b>School conditions strategies</b>		
9.	Support young women with children with their parenting leave for a year, then for a year's leave without pay, and then facilitate their return to the school.	CS2
10.	Reduce their work load, just ease them into it for the first couple of years and reduce the expectations on them early on. Also implement appropriate strategies for supporting graduates in our harder schools to reduce burnout rates.	CS3 and CS10
11.	Create an environment or culture that is friendly and supportive.	CS8
<b>Strategies for remote and rural regions</b>		
12.	Develop a strategy that recognises and supports young teachers in remote areas, as they get married and have a family.	CS5
13.	Organise a pre - acceptance visit for new graduate teachers to remote areas for them to meet the people and see the environment and thereby get a feel of whether they like it.	CS5

#### 4.4.2 Findings from Retired Teachers In-depth Interviews

This section reports the results of the online in-depth interviews conducted with retired teachers between June and August 2006. The purpose of the interviews was to examine the issues affecting teacher attraction and retention in WA. The respondents were asked why they thought teachers leave and to suggest strategies which could assist in improving the teacher shortage problems.

Although the questionnaire was open to all retired teachers with access to the retired teachers' website, only five retirees responded. These respondents have been coded as RT01, RT02, RT03, RT04 and RT05 and their demographics are as follows. All had taught with the government sector. Three had been primary teachers.

Of the five respondents, there was one female and four males and all were over fifty years of age. There was an equal mix of teaching in metropolitan and regional schools (four each), two had taught in remote regions. In the sample, three were

experienced in subject areas where there is teacher shortage (Mathematics, Science, LOTE) and each had over 21 years average working experience in the school sector – for details of the participants’ demographics, see Appendix 4.2.

The findings from the participants’ responses for each issue covered by the interview questions are discussed below. The results are presented using similar themes as for the Delphi study. This enables comparisons of the results with the Delphi study phase.

#### **4.4.2.1 Why people are attracted to teaching?**

The participants agreed they went into teaching because it helped them contribute to society through imparting skills to students. Some enjoyed working with children, others because of educational values and personal values, for instance Participant RT04 said “*it is in the family*”. They cited other reasons as reasonable salaries, flexible hours and sufficient holidays. For example, RT03 said he was attracted to teaching because of the “*freedom to be somewhat autonomous, the non office environment, the hours in situ being reasonable and the variety of experiences at work*”. The above reasons can be grouped respectively into main categories of **Personal characteristics**, **Working conditions** and **School conditions**.

Summing it up, Participant RT04 explained he became a teacher because of “*the holidays, desire to impart knowledge, working with children or youth, money ..., adventure...*”. Participant RT02 cautioned that “*many new teachers today do not go into teaching for the right reasons. It is usually because of their (low) TER score*”. A further comment from Participant RT05 was that “*many people are attracted by starting*

*salaries and long holidays, with medium term opportunities to travel/work overseas. Some, very few, are interested in the intrinsic or social value of education”.*

#### **4.4.2.2 Why teachers leave the profession?**

People may be attracted to the teaching profession, but why are they not retained?

Several reasons were suggested as to why teachers leave the profession.

**Working conditions:** Participants pointed to inadequate reward for individual achievements, poor salaries and conditions - relative to other professions.

**School conditions:** Poor discipline in schools and in the public sector, RT01’s opinion was that the government is not giving teachers a sufficiently free hand to handle this issue. This view was also supported by RT02 and RT05 who respectively stated, *“more needs to be done in schools with behaviour, very often teachers get no back up ... and children are doing as they like”* and there is a *“lack of support in many schools for behavioural management problems. If only state schools could expel students as easily as is done in private schools, there would be much less of a problem”*.

There is also the issue of lack of respect for teachers and their views. RT02 mentioned that *“Staff must be happy and this does not mean a drink on Fridays at the pub. Their views must be respected. They must be respected”*. Furthermore, there was the issue of school leadership. Participants were of the opinion that in some cases, school leadership is under stress. Sometimes there are inappropriately selected school administrators and there is an absence of management - teacher aligned objectives, with administrators pursuing self-motivated goals.

According to RT01, it is not uncommon that sometimes nepotistic opportunists, with little skills for the job, are promoted to school leadership positions. These *“smile and say all the right things and do nothing except continue to be a sycophant to DET”*. RT03 also added that *“administrators are too often interested in self promotion rather than excellence in education and supporting teachers in the classroom”*.

**Perception that teaching is unattractive:** There is the low profile of the teaching profession in the eye of the community as RT02 stated that *“teaching needs to be seen as a worthwhile profession and I don't mean WACOT. Somehow it needs upgrading in the community”*.

**Living conditions:** Problems arise from living in the Countryside, for instance *“a city new graduate can end up with permanency in the country but wants the city”* (RT04). Unfortunately, country postings appear to be made without considering family commitments and in a mechanical way. As RT04 recalled *“my wife and I spent 3 years in (a) remote (location). I was posted to Narrogin (215 kms to the Southwest of Perth) and then to Tom Price (1047 kms North, in the Pilbara). No one cared. They moved us out of remote because of a staffing formula! I had 10 years experience teaching traditional Aboriginals in remote locations”*.

**Alternative employment opportunities:** The participants suggested that teachers who leave to go to alternative professions appear to be those who came in for the wrong reasons. As already mentioned, some pick up studying education because of their low TER score. Similarly, participant RT01 highlighted that *“the universities are at fault for enrolling for money grants anyone who will do the Ed Degrees”*.

#### 4.4.2.3 Ranking of attraction and retention influencing factors

As with the Delphi study, the factors influencing teacher attraction and retention were grouped into six categories and participants were asked to rank these in the order of importance. They were also asked to suggest any other factors they felt were important. The result of the ranking from the different participants is shown in Table 4.17. As with the Delphi analysis, to get the most representative ranking for each category, the median and mode have been used as the ranking criteria.

Table 4.17: Ranking Results

Delphi Ranking	Retired Teachers Ranking	Median	Mode
1st Working Conditions	1st Working Conditions	1	1
2nd School conditions	3rd School conditions	3	3, 4
3rd Living conditions	4th Living conditions	4	3
4th Alternative employment	6th Alternative employment	5	5
5th Personal characteristics	2nd Personal characteristics	2	2
6th Perception	5th Perception	4	6

The retired teachers agreed with the Delphi respondents that ‘Working Conditions’ were the most important category of factors that influenced attraction and retention as shown in Table 4.17. The retired teachers also suggested a new category, which the researcher has named ‘**Curriculum and Extraneous Demands**’ as another category of influencing factors. Factors under this category contribute to teacher dissatisfaction and the participants highlighted the following cases. The introduction of Curriculum Framework, Courses of Study and Outcomes Based Education (OBE) by the WA government had a negative impact on teachers. Participants pointed to far too many changes being made, including too much reporting and paper work.



Participant RT03 complained of *“the lack of standards and sense of purpose - a new emphasis on the curriculum and syllabus”*; RT01 said *“OBE has to go”*. According to RT04, there is a *“ridiculous amount of reporting and paperwork in this age of computers and too many staffing changes in all aspects of education”*. RT04 further complained of the *“implementation of change for changes sake - usually implemented by newly risen administrators to make their mark”*! As RT05 summarised, there is *“too much interference from central office and the curriculum council - not allowing teachers to ‘get on with the job’, failure to listen to what classroom teachers are saying and overemphasis on reporting and assessment”*.

#### **4.4.2.4 Strategies for improving teacher attraction / retention**

The retired teachers suggested several strategies that could improve the attraction and retention of teachers and these are described below.

**Appraisal and performance management strategies:** Using the principles of taxonomy, the responses have been grouped into Objectives, Methods and Results of performance appraisal. Comments related to objectives included *“teacher praise as distinct from appraisal would go some way in helping retention”* (RT05). RT02 was of the opinion that the current practice of performance appraisal seems okay, but added that the objective *“must be performance appraisal not an opportunity for administration to put the boots in - I worked my last 12 months as acting admin so I see both sides of the story”*.

The method of teacher appraisal and performance management should be one that is objective. According to participant RT03, *“teacher appraisal could be more objective to rectify undue personal bias of personalities, and performance management*

*should focus on the attainment of the class with less emphasis on the teacher's ability to incorporate new buzz-words and politically correct language in their speech".* Participant RT04 said the current practice is too prone to personality conflicts and peer assessment is not realistic, but acknowledged *"my advancement to ST1 was a simple and appropriate process"*.

Performance management would mean nothing if the outcomes (whether praise or concern) were not implemented. According to participant RT01, *"appraisal means nothing in the end, as a teacher has been shown to be unable to speak and write English competently, be unable to control and teach a class, and WACOT still registers him"!*.

**Professional development strategies for teachers:** Responses have been classified into the following sub-themes, namely Relevance, Timing and Method of professional development (PD). All participants agreed that PD must be relevant for it to be useful. It appears the experience with PD programs run by the Department of Education and Training is not all positive. Participant RT03 said it is *"of little importance - most see it as an inconvenient imposition that rarely satisfies and inspires"*. As participant RT01 queried, *"how often do we sit through PD where our teaching area is not mentioned at all? Presenters must really understand what they are talking about, not being given an agenda by the department"*.

It was suggested that Access Asia PD programs appear to be the best currently on offer. According to participant RT05, they are *"always interesting and beneficial - they focus on good classroom practice"*. RT05 further added that *"the Classroom Relationships Project was a hugely beneficial psycho/social analysis of teacher student*

*relationships*”, stating that it was a brilliant program for helping self-awareness and improving classroom function in the 1980s.

In relation to timing, participants felt that where possible PD should be given during school hours i.e. from 08.30 to 17.00 hours. According to Participant RT02, *“doing PD after school is not very helpful. We have just done a full day’s work and probably dealt with dramas and don’t feel like sitting and contributing in a meaningful way”*. Also, for PD to be effective, its method has to be appropriate for its intended purpose and audience. Participant RT04 suggested that smaller groups would be preferred, noting that networking is most effective in small groups. Furthermore, participant RT05 added that in over 30 years of teaching and PD, he experienced only 3 forms of worthwhile PD. According to him, *“early in my profession, subject superintendents coordinated workshops which encouraged meta-cognitive processes related to the teaching of English. The emphasis was on teaching/learning and innovation and NOT on assessment”*. He regretted that this form of PD has not happened since the late 1970s.

**Reward strategies for teachers:** The participants were divided on whether teachers’ pay was adequate. For instance, whilst participant RT01 said there is *“not enough pay for what teachers are now required to do”*, participant RT02 said *“to be honest I feel that our salary is quite adequate”*. Similarly, participant RT03 observed that *“rates of pay are never the most important factor”*, but participant RT05 suggested, *“double the salary and there won’t be a teacher shortage. This would bring us into line with our Canadian counterparts”*. Participants also suggested the need to acknowledge the individual so that they are valued and their efforts are appreciated. A differentiated

reward for areas of need and teacher type was deemed very important.

**School conditions strategies:** Participants generally felt that having the right culture is very important in the school. Unfortunately, according to participant RT05, “*many schools are in ‘survival mode’ - lurching from one crisis to the next, rarely having time to come up for air*”. Hence, in some schools, the culture is “*appallingly negative*” (RT01). The participants suggested leadership support and commitment could help solve this issue. According to participant RT02, “*if you are not happy in your workplace it is foul. Some administrators need to learn people skills. They should have a commitment to the school, not see it as a rung on the ladder to climb higher*”. Participant RT05 added, “*if staff feel supported within their subject department / school, they are much more likely to want to stay*”. In relation to behaviour and discipline problems, participants suggested that effective discipline should be allowed in schools so the expulsion of disruptive students was easier.

**Strategies to address the perception that teaching is unappealing:** Participants suggested there was a need to promote teaching in a more positive light. For example, RT05 said, “*have the politicians, the media, DET officials etc. just occasionally to say positive things about the teaching profession and state schools*”. In addition, RT02 wanted the TER score for candidates into teaching degrees upgraded to get the best into the profession.

**Curriculum and extraneous demands strategies:** Participants suggested the need to minimise implementing changes for the sake of change.

**Strategies for the specific teacher shortage problems:** Participants were required to offer specific strategies they felt would help address the teacher shortage problems that had been identified in the Delphi study. The problems were; threat of a general shortage, gender imbalance, staffing schools in regions, and shortage in specific learning areas (Mathematics, Sciences, LOTE). The strategies suggested are presented below.

In relation to the threat of a general shortage, the participants suggested the need for more pay or an extra monetary reward. Under gender imbalance, strategies for making schools a less intimidating environment for male teachers could help address the gender imbalance amongst teachers. Compulsory postings to the regional areas would help schools in the regions. According to participant RT02, *“as it was many years ago, all new teachers had to do a term in the country, but they do need to be assured of a return to the city after 5 or 6 years”*. This strategy was supported by RT03 who recommended the need to *“allow for a specific length of duty in a regional area to be rewarded with a personal choice of subsequent appointment”*.

For shortage in specific learning area, participants suggested a more flexible approach that rewards and recognises the fact that teachers have skills to teach across many areas, rather than limiting teachers to their course of study. For instance participant RT04 said *“Give teachers variety in their work (for those who want it) and then recognise it. For example New South Wales recognises 2 years of successfully teaching a subject as eligibility to be listed as competent”*. Furthermore, improved learning and development especially for LOTE teachers would help. RT05 highlighted, *“many LOTE teachers are not well trained or well supported - they need much more support. If there is a neglected segment in teaching, LOTE is it”*.

#### **4.4.3 Findings from the Teacher Survey**

This section reports the results of the last of the three procedures employed under Case study B, namely the electronic survey of serving teachers, which was carried out between July and December 2006. As with the earlier procedures, the key questions focused on what attracts people to teaching, why teachers leave and strategies for improvement. The survey procedure however also attempted to investigate if there was any association between participants' personal characteristics and their current opinions on attraction / retention problems.

Although the questionnaire was open to all public school teachers with access to the DET website, only thirty-one (31) teachers responded. These respondents have been coded from TS01 through to TS31 and their demographics are presented below.

##### **4.4.3.1 Demographics of participating teachers**

Participants were aged between twenty and fifty years, seventy-one percent (71%) were female, whilst 29% were male. Their experiences ranged from less than five (5) years to more than twenty-one (21) years in the teaching profession. Although participants were current teachers in the public school sector, 6% of them had taught in the Catholic sector, but none indicated having taught in the independent sector.

More primary school teachers (fifty-eight percent) participated than their secondary counterparts (thirty-nine percent). Three percent (3%) of the participants came from other school types different from the conventional primary and secondary systems. Seventy-four percent (74%) of the participants were from schools located in the Metropolitan areas, whilst the remaining twenty-six (26%) were from the Regional

and Remote areas. The distribution of participants according to the subjects taught shows this to include subjects of concern such as Mathematics, Science and LOTE. The details of the participants' demographics are shown in Appendix 4.3.

#### 4.4.3.2 Why the participants were attracted to teaching

Participants were required to rate, on the scale of 1 – 10 (from least to very important), the level of importance they personally attached to each of the eighteen statements which represent reasons people are attracted to the teaching profession. The distribution in Table 4.18 shows participants' responses represented in different central tendency formats such as mean, standard deviation, and the median for each reason. Standard deviation (Std Dev) values have also been computed to show the degree of spread of the participants' responses under each reason. Using the median, which is the best indicator of a typical measure as the ranking criterion, the reasons have been arranged in the order of importance from the most critical to less critical.

Table 4.18: Reasons Participants were Attracted to Teaching

Reasons	Mean	Std Dev	%VI	% MI	% LI	Median
I enjoy working with children	8	3	74%	16%	10%	10
Teaching is intellectually fulfilling	7	2	55%	32%	13%	8
Teaching helps me contribute to society	7	3	61%	29%	10%	8
Teaching allows me to work in a subject area I love	8	2	61%	32%	6%	8
Teachers have a positive impact as role models	7	3	52%	32%	16%	8
Teaching offers me flexible hours and sufficient holidays	7	3	52%	39%	10%	8
Schools offer educational values	6	2	45%	45%	10%	7
My career as a teacher suits my family needs	6	4	45%	26%	29%	7
Teaching offers me opportunities for professional development	6	3	42%	32%	26%	6
Teaching offers good job security	5	3	29%	42%	29%	6
My own school experiences attracted me to teaching	5	4	42%	19%	39%	5
Teachers salaries and benefits are very reasonable	5	2	16%	52%	32%	5
Teaching provides an opportunity to travel	5	3	26%	32%	42%	5

Reasons	Mean	Std Dev	%VI	% MI	% LI	Median
The profession offers good promotional prospects	4	3	10%	48%	42%	4
Teachers receive positive acknowledgements from society	3	2	3%	32%	65%	3
My religious values influenced my decision to teach	2	2	3%	16%	81%	1
A teaching recruitment campaign attracted me to teaching	2	2	6%	3%	90%	1
Access to curriculum materials benefits me as a parent	3	3	6%	29%	65%	1

Table 4.18 also includes a percentage distribution, which is the percentage of the total number of participants with specific scores for each reason. The percentages are distributed using VI (very important - scores of 8 and above), MI (moderately important - scores ranging from 4 to 7) and LI (least important ratings - scores of 3 and below) respectively. The reasons have been grouped into intrinsic (highlighted yellow), conditional (pink) and extrinsic (blue) categories of reasons. From Table 4.18, there were six reasons with a high median score of 8, five of which fall into the right intrinsic personal characteristic reasons that attract people to teaching, whilst the sixth is an extrinsic reason. A combined average of 61% regarded the first five intrinsic reasons as very important, 28% as moderately important and 11% considered them as least important. This suggests that the 11% may be in the teaching profession for reasons other than the aforementioned intrinsic ones. Further analysis of the responses from these 11% did confirm that they were in the teaching profession either because teaching suits their family needs or it provides an opportunity to travel.

In relation to the extrinsic type of rewards that teachers get from the profession, such as ‘Teaching offers me opportunities for professional development’, ‘Teaching offers good job security’, ‘Teachers salaries and benefits are very reasonable’, ‘Teaching provides an opportunity to travel’ and ‘The profession offers good promotional prospects’, the median scores in Table 4.18 are within the moderate



important range (i.e. between 4 and 7). This suggests that these aspects are important as well, even for participants who had ranked the more intrinsic reasons as very important. The foregoing findings represented overall result for all the teacher survey participants. Breaking it down by age group, the reasons those in the 20 – 30 years group (or early career teachers) were attracted to teaching are listed in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Reasons 20 – 30 Year old Participants were Attracted to Teaching

Reasons	%VI	% MI	% LI	Combined
I enjoy working with children	100%	0%	0%	VI
Teaching is intellectually fulfilling	67%	17%	17%	VI
Teaching helps me contribute to society	67%	33%	0%	VI
Teaching allows me to work in a subject area I love	67%	17%	17%	VI
Teachers have a positive impact as role models	83%	17%	0%	VI
Teaching offers me flexible hours and sufficient holidays	50%	50%	0%	VI
Schools offer educational values	50%	50%	0%	VI
My career as a teacher suits my family needs	33%	17%	50%	MI
Teaching offers me opportunities for professional development	50%	33%	17%	MI
Teaching offers good job security	17%	33%	50%	LI
My own school experiences attracted me to teaching	50%	33%	17%	MI
Teachers salaries and benefits are very reasonable	17%	33%	50%	MI
Teaching provides an opportunity to travel	50%	17%	33%	MI
The profession offers good promotional prospects	0%	83%	17%	MI
Teachers receive positive acknowledgements from society	0%	50%	50%	MI
My religious values influenced my decision to teach	0%	17%	83%	LI
A teaching recruitment campaign attracted me to teaching	0%	17%	83%	LI
Access to curriculum materials benefits me as a parent	0%	33%	67%	LI

#### 4.4.3.3 Strategies for improving attraction and retention

**Strategies for improving retention of teachers in general:** Participants' ratings on the scale of 1 – 10 (from least to very important) of strategies for improving retention of teachers are presented in the Table 4.20. The table shows the mean, standard deviation, and the median of the ratings. The strategies are presented in order of importance using

the median scores as the basis for ranking.

Table 4.20: Strategies for Improving Retention

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Median</b>
Pay more competitive salaries	8	2	9
Reduce the work load	8	2	9
Teachers should teach and have minimal administrative duties	8	2	9
Establish alternate reward / recognition schemes	7	3	8
Provide flexible options to move from Country to City postings	7	3	8
Enhance the collegial ethos and culture at the school level	7	3	8
Provide more trained classroom assistants	8	2	8
Encourage further studies in specialised areas	6	3	7
Provide incentives to teach in subjects with teacher shortages	6	3	7
Give Principals a choice in staffing their school	6	3	6

Table 4.20 shows that all the strategies ranked above 5 are considered important for improving retention of teachers. The strategies that stand out are related to paying more and minimisation of work load and non-teaching assignments. The low standard deviations for these top three items show a high degree of agreement amongst the participants.

Table 4.21: Strategies for Early Career Teachers

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>	<b>Median</b>
Provide more support and professional development to early career teachers	4	1	5
Provide mentors to early career teachers	4	1	5
Develop relationships and support for students during teacher training	4	1	4
Have more realistic job previews for trainee teachers	4	1	4
Confirm employment for high achieving graduates early	3	1	3

**Strategies for improving attraction / retention of early career teachers:** Strategies for improving attraction / retention of early career teachers are presented in the Table 4.21. The scale used in these ratings range from 1 (least important) to 5 (very important). The mean, standard deviation and median of the responses are shown. Table 4.21 indicates that all participants agreed all the five strategies were important to help improve the attraction / retention of early career teachers.

#### **4.4.3.4 Participant's future career direction and preferences**

This subsection presents the analysis of the participants work location preferences, future career intentions and the relationships with their personal characteristics.

**Preferred work location:** The percentage of participants and their preferred work locations are shown in Table 4.22. This Table shows that none of the participants preferred to continually work in the remote locations, however 49% of the participants would be happy to work there for short term durations ranging from one term to a 2-year period.

Table 4.22: Percentage of Participants' Location Preferences

I prefer to work in the metropolitan area	87%
I prefer to work in the rural areas	13%
I prefer to work in a remote location	0%
Happy to work in a remote area for a 2-year period	23%
Happy to work in a remote area if only for 1 year	10%
Happy to work in a remote area for short periods of one term or more	16%

These responses have been broken down into the respondents' years worked as presented in Table 4.23. This shows that those willing to work in remote areas for short periods, span the entire range of years worked, i.e. from the early career teachers to

those who have put in over 20 years in the profession. This confirms that if given the right conditions of posting, there will be early, mid and/or advanced career teachers, who are willing to take up various durations in the remote locations. This is a key finding to help address shortages in remote locations.

Table 4.23: Remote Location Choices by Years Worked

Remote Location Choices	Years Worked				
	< 5	5-10	11-15	16-20	>21
Happy to work in a remote area for a 2-year period	11.1%	42.8%	0%	100%	20.0%
Happy to work in a remote area if only for 1 year	11.1%	28.6%	0%	0%	0%
Happy to work in a remote area for short periods of one term or more	22.2%	0%	25.0%	0%	20.0%
Not willing to work in a remote area for any duration	55.5%	28.6%	75.0%	0%	60.0%

**Future career intentions:** Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the participants desired an immediate change of career from teaching. The remaining 71% planned to remain in the school sector for 2 years (13%), 5 years (26%), 10 years or longer (16%) or until retirement (16%). Responses were analysed against years worked as shown in Table 4.24, but no clear pattern could be drawn. However the finding is concerning. Of the older teachers with 16 – 20 years experience, all wanted a career change and of the early career teachers (i.e. with less than 5 years), over sixty-six percent (66.6%) indicated they would only stay for five years or less!

Table 4.24: Future Career Intentions by Years Worked

Future intentions	Years Worked				
	< 5	5-10	11-15	16-20	>21
Want to change careers	33.3%	14.3%	25.0%	100%	40.0%
Intend to stay for 5 years or less	33.3%	57.1%	25.0%	0%	40.0%
Intend to stay for 10 years and more until retirement	33.3%	28.6%	50.0%	0%	20.0%

To find out if there is a relationship between the participants' personal characteristics and their intentions to stay or leave the profession, the median of the participants' responses on the reasons they are attracted to teaching were compared with their future intentions – see Table 4.25. The objective was to investigate if the characteristics of teachers intending to stay differed from those wishing to leave the profession. As done in Table 4.18, the reasons why teachers are attracted have been categorised into intrinsic (highlighted yellow), conditional (pink) and extrinsic (blue) groupings in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25: Reasons for Attraction and Future Career Intentions

Reasons	Time to Leaving Teaching		
	Now	5 years	10 years
	Median	Median	Median
1. I enjoy working with children	8	9	10
2. Teaching is intellectually fulfilling	5	8	9
3. Teaching helps me contribute to society	8	8	8
4. Schools offer educational values	5	8	8
5. My career as a teacher suits my family needs	7	9	7
6. Teaching allows me to work in a subject area I love	7	8	9
7. My own school experiences attracted me to teaching	1	4	8
8. My religious values influenced my decision to teach	1	1	1
9. A teaching recruitment campaign attracted me to teaching	1	1	1
10. Teaching offers me opportunities for professional development	4	6	7
11. The profession offers good promotional prospects	1	6	5
12. Teachers receive positive acknowledgements from society	1	4	3
13. Teachers have a positive impact as role models	6	7	8
14. Access to curriculum materials benefits me as a parent	1	1	5
15. Teaching offers good job security	5	7	6
16. Teachers salaries and benefits are very reasonable	3	6	6
17. Teaching offers me flexible hours and sufficient holidays	8	9	7
18. Teaching provides an opportunity to travel	3	5	5

It is interesting to note that for five out of the seven intrinsic factors, between those wishing to leave and those staying, there is an increasing median value trend, which reflects the degree of importance the participants attached to these factors. The participants wishing to 'leave now' placed the least importance on these factors, whilst those wishing to stay attached a relatively higher degree of importance to the intrinsic factors. Table 4.25 also shows that all the participants seem to place the same level of importance on conditional factors or reasons, although this pattern does not extend to extrinsic factors. Specifically, the participants wishing to stay appear to appreciate their current salary and benefits more than those wishing to leave.

#### **4.4.3.5 Additional strategies for improving attraction/retention**

Participants were requested to provide suggestions on additional strategies for improving the attraction / retention of teachers, and for consistency, these have been grouped into similar themes as in earlier procedures.

**Professional development strategies for teachers:** Professional development and support for early teachers was a key suggestion. Participant TS03 stated *“newly graduated teachers are left to 'sink or swim' in classrooms. Mentors can only do so much as they usually have their own class to teach as well. Often these new teachers are placed into year groups not suited to them or for which they don't have the skills! These teachers really need ongoing, intense professional development within their first twelve to eighteen months of teaching to ensure they are 'getting it right'”*.

This call was also made by participant TS10 who stated, *"I believe that the Department of Education should give a syllabus to beginning teachers describing what*

*is expected from the teacher of the various levels or grades. This syllabus should describe the concepts that they expect to be taught at the various levels or years. As a beginning teacher I feel extremely stressed as I develop my own program based on the Curriculum Framework. I am considering leaving the profession as I do not believe that the current conditions are worth the stress on my family and myself".*

**Recruitment and selection strategies:** There was a call for more independence for schools recruiting their own teachers. As participant TS22 claimed, *"I work in a merit select school which gives us the ability to select our staff, but there is still the double standard of the department taking away great staff and sending us forced transfers who might not suit our criteria. This is very frustrating for us"*. Furthermore, as participant TS21 highlighted, *"not knowing job prospects until the last minute (summer holidays) is simply not good enough"*. This suggests that job openings and advertisements for positions should happen much earlier than currently experienced.

**Reward strategies for teachers:** On reward, although participant TS22 thought the pay teachers get *"is great and the increments and senior / level 3 pay is definitely a reward for good teachers to stay in the classroom"*, the general suggestion was for an upward review of teachers' wages.

**School conditions strategies:** High workload and teacher burnout were identified as issues to address if teachers are to be retained. Participant TS15 said, *"in terms of teacher retention, the word at the chalk face is that teachers are burned out and tired. In our school alone 4 professional, hardworking, brilliant teachers are leaving due to the stress of demanding students with abusive parents, demands of paper work, extra-*

*curricular activities, meetings, new reports, outcomes, performance management requirements, new initiatives, etc. I can easily work 10 hours a day and 3-4 hours on the weekend and I know quite a few others who do the same”.*

Managing behaviour and discipline issues was raised as another theme that would influence teacher retention. Participant TS26 suggested retention “*would improve if alternate facilities were available to remove assaultive students ... It is impossible to get satisfaction from teaching when you spend 90% of your effort on student management”.*

**Strategies to address perception that teaching is unappealing:** The level of recognition of the job teachers do appears to be low; strategies to enhance perceptions about the profession would help. Participant TS22 said “*I think that overall teachers are under recognised by the community at large and that is reinforced through the media. But most people who know teachers (and most importantly our children & their parents) know we do a difficult job and they thank us for it”.*

**Curriculum and extraneous demands strategies:** The effect of Outcomes Based Education (OBE) was raised as a key issue requiring resolution. As participant TS02 puts it, “*many teachers are thinking of resigning to avoid the huge workloads and lack of understanding involved”.*

Too much interference from central office with overemphasis on reporting and assessment continue to worry teachers. As participant TS14 complained, “*I am a secondary teacher, I love my classes, I teach mostly Senior School, I am most upset at*



*the administritivia I am required to do. Our school takes on any surveys, gimmicks, PD suggestions, flavour of the month from DET. I have analysed my Year 2005 results on about 5 occasions I cannot get any more blood out of the stone. I have tables / statistics / annual reports ... results /school plan / performance management plans ... I chew over the same rag in the name of improvement”.*

**Strategies for remote and rural regions:** Country postings should give consideration to family commitments as participant TS04 put it *“I am not prepared to take a family to remote locations”*. Where a teacher has accepted a country posting, the return commitments should be honoured, that is, there should be a commitment to return such a teacher to a regional or metropolitan posting. *“I have been teaching for 4 years and when graduating from university was told to go country and get permanency and then move back to the metro area. I have been in a country town for 4 years and the education department will not transfer me to a city school”* stated participant TS13.

#### **4.4.4 Summary of Case Study B Findings**

The three procedures employed under Case study B generated several findings on what attracts people to teaching, why teachers leave and strategies for improving attraction and retention. The study also confirmed the extent of the teacher shortage problems in WA and tested out the relationship between the motivational characteristics of teachers and their desire to stay or leave the profession. Overall, the key findings indicate that shortage problems range from minor to moderate in the independent and catholic schools. In contrast, large independent schools are better placed to work towards implementing ‘employer of choice’ strategies for making them attractive schools to work for. The smaller schools tend to rely on a communal atmosphere and teachers intrinsic characteristics being aligned to the school philosophy or religious ethos.

Although the government schools employ several strategies, they experience moderate to major teacher shortage problems with the major attraction and retention problems in regional/remote locations, but there are still moderate problems in metropolitan schools. Respondents believe the implementation of SHRM would positively influence teacher attraction / retention, but organisations need to be willing to make some concessions for the approach to be successful. The concessions include the willingness to increase the involvement of HR in staff issues and strategies, and to make trade-offs between traditionally preferred options and business alternatives that achieve the goal of attraction / retention.

Respondents in the three groups identified 'Working conditions' as the most influential factor for attracting and retaining teachers. This is followed by 'Personal characteristics of teachers' and 'School conditions'. The top ten (10) reasons people are attracted to teaching listed in order of importance, are; they enjoy working with children, teaching is intellectually fulfilling, teaching helps them contribute to society, teaching allows people to work in a subject they love, teachers have a positive impact as role models, teaching offers flexible hours and sufficient holidays, schools offer educational values, career as a teacher suits their family needs, teaching offers opportunities for professional development, and teaching offers good job security.

No participants preferred to work continuously in the remote locations, but nearly a quarter of participants, regardless of years of teaching, indicated they would not mind working in remote areas in short or medium term postings. Twenty-nine percent (29%) of the participants' desired immediate change of career from teaching and this was highest among mid career teachers and early career teachers. The participants

wishing to 'leave now' placed the least importance on intrinsic motivational factors, whilst those wishing to stay attached a relatively higher degree of importance to the factors.

A number of strategies for improving the attraction / retention of teachers have been recommended. These include appraisal and performance management strategies, professional development strategies, recruitment and selection strategies, and reward strategies for teachers. Other strategies for enhancing the ethos and culture within schools were suggested as well as those for addressing the perception that teaching is unappealing and for specific strategies to address identified areas of shortage such as strategies for remote and rural regions.

## **4.5 Conclusion**

This chapter presents the evidence of the multiple method research procedures and their findings. It has covered the preliminary Delphi study results, and the subsequent Case study A and Case study B results sequentially, in response to the two main research questions:

1. *How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?*
2. *Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

The multiple data gathering procedures employed generated a large volume of qualitative data. This analysis involved examining, categorising and tabulating the data via a deductive process that built detailed descriptions for each theme and allowed cross-case synthesis and testing the results from earlier procedures. A small amount of quantitative data was also involved, and was analysed non-parametrically with central tendency statistical computations to determine the typical and most frequent responses.

In relation to the status of SHRM implementation, the Delphi study found the degree of uptake of SHRM to be at similar levels across all sectors with scores out of 10 of 7.3 for the Independent, 7.0 for the Catholic and 7.5 for the Government sector. The scores meant that the existing HR policies and strategies in all the school sectors appear to be in line with the guidelines suggested in the WA public sector management SHRM framework. However, the Case study A research being much more elaborate found more variation in the status of SHRM implementation (from weak to strong evidence of uptake) across the schools, albeit depending largely on the size of the schools. Five out of the ten participating case study sites showed a strong evidence of SHRM uptake, four showed moderate evidence and the last case had weak evidence.

Overall, 'Working conditions' was seen as the most important group of factors with the most influence on teacher attraction and retention. Under this category are the HR functions of compensation / reward / recognition schemes, career progression, effective professional development, fair appraisal and performance management of teachers. This is followed by 'Personal characteristics of teachers' and 'School conditions', 'personal characteristics' confirming that intrinsic motivational drivers are very important if teachers are to be retained, whilst 'school conditions' is critical

because the right culture is very important in the school for teachers.

A number of strategies for improving the attraction / retention of teachers were recommended. These include the need to pay more competitive salaries, establish alternate reward / recognition schemes, provide flexible options to move from Country to City postings, reduce the work load, enhance the collegial ethos and culture at the school level. Teachers should be left to teach and have minimal administrative duties. Other strategies suggested were to provide more trained classroom assistants, develop relationships and support for students during teacher training, have more realistic job previews for trainee teachers, and provide more support and professional development to early career teachers. Detailed discussions on how the results of the analysis in this chapter have answered the two main research questions within the context of the literature are presented in Chapter 5.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

The thesis explores the implementation of a strategic human resource management (SHRM) approach within the school sector in Western Australia and investigates the utilisation of SHRM functions that schools could adopt to enhance the attraction and retention of teachers. The research was conducted to answer the following two main research questions:

- *How effectively is strategic human resource management (SHRM) implemented in the WA school sector currently?*
- *Are the human resource management functions (appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward) aligned in a SHRM approach and what SHRM strategies could be implemented to improve attraction and retention of teachers in WA?*

The previous Chapters covered the research background, literature review, the methodology employed, the analysis and findings. This Chapter discusses the findings, the research implications and final conclusions. The Chapter is divided into six main sections. First is an introduction, second a discussion of the findings of the factors that influence and moderate the extent to which WA schools have embraced the school model of SHRM. The third section discusses the findings on teacher shortage problems in WA, what attracts people to teaching, why teachers leave and strategies for improving attraction and retention. Limitations, such as the sizes of the different samples and generalisability of the findings, are discussed in the fourth section. To support reliable research outcomes, multiple methods were used to triangulate the data

from the key external and internal stakeholders of the school system. The fifth section discusses the theoretical implications and contribution this study makes to the existing literature on the subject of the application of SHRM in the school sector in general and its influence on improving teacher attraction / retention. The sixth and final section presents the overall conclusions.

## **5.2 Implementation of Strategic HRM in Schools**

The purpose of the first research question was to evaluate if human resource management is being practiced strategically in Western Australian schools. The model of SHRM developed from the literature to form the conceptual schema presented in section 2.6, Figure 2.4, suggested the extent of SHRM in a school system is directly dependent on four key SHRM requirements. These being an established strategic planning process, a clear statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives, a dedicated HR department and the vertical alignment and horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices. The degree of implementation of SHRM is moderated by factors such as the size, location, and ownership of the schools. An additional moderating factor emerged from the research and has been labeled 'Principal's Disposition'. The following subsections discuss the research findings and the above factors.

### **5.2.1 Strategic Planning Process**

The analysis identified differing patterns of strategic planning for each site, with evidence rated as strong, moderate or weak. For example, strong evidence of strategic planning occurred where a site had a strategic planning process and a defined time-frame for the plan. The absence of a defined time-frame led to a downgrade to moderate

evidence, whereas a weak classification occurred where there was no formal process for planning.

All large (except one) independent schools, the DET and all large catholic schools had moderate to strong evidence of strategic planning. Specific features from such sites showed that the strategic planning process involved combinations of the school management team, HR manager and students committee. Although updated annually, the plan covered between 3 and 7 years time horizons. Case CS4 was an example with strong evidence and CS4 confirmed, “we have a College Strategic Plan. We have a Human Resource Strategic Plan or elements of the strategic plan which are particularly human resource focused, and then we have human resource operational plans as well which I review on an annual basis”. The school strategic plan document contained the strategic vision, objectives and key activities of the school for the planning period, whilst the HR departmental plan took its lead from the school strategic plan. The plan contained the plan of HR activities for realising the staff related aspects of the school objectives.

Medium to small independent and catholic schools had weak evidence of strategic planning. Of the sites with weak evidence of strategic planning, the large independent school without a strategic plan had commenced developing HR policies and procedures, whilst there was no evidence of formal strategic planning in the small to medium independent and catholic schools. Of course, weak evidence does not necessarily mean the schools are not engaging in some form of strategic planning. However the question is whether it is sufficiently focused enough to provide any competitive edge.



The above descriptions support the contention that strategic planning processes are ‘best’ kept short and simple (Tompkins 2002). The process is undertaken by top management with the involvement of Human Resources staff, and the plans could be three years or more (Heneman and Judge 2003).

### **5.2.2 Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives**

A clear written mission statement that covers all aspects of a school’s business objectives and strategies and included teaching staff as important stakeholders, was deemed strong evidence of SHRM. Having these in place with no reference to teachers was assigned as moderate evidence. All sites had evidence of mission statements. The six sites with strong evidence, had clear written mission statements covering all key business aspects and staff, whilst four with moderate evidence, focused on educational excellence for students only, with no acknowledgement for teachers as key stakeholders. The Mission statements and strategic objectives help define the main goals of the organisation (Bamberger and Meshoulam 2000). They can also state the desired expectations and should cover every aspect of the business (Tompkins 2002) including teachers for the school sector.

Not all schools included staff in their mission statements and objectives, which could give an indication of how teachers are valued. Acknowledging staff as important stakeholders demonstrates the schools commitment to protecting and developing the interests of the teaching staff. This commitment confirms that staff and their intellectual capital are valued, and fits with Tompkins (2002) advice on the specific point of managing resources strategically.

### **5.2.3 Dedicated HR Department**

Having a HR manager / officer who is part of the school management team and involved in the strategic planning process provided strong evidence for the requirement of dedicated HR department. The exclusion of HR staff from strategic responsibilities was assigned as moderate evidence. Having no dedicated HR staff indicated weak evidence of SHRM implementation. Two large independent schools and the DET showed evidence of a strong dedicated HR department. For these, the HR department consisted of more than two employees with the HR managers as members of the executive team. In addition, HR was implemented both strategically and operationally to address issues such as the tight labour market shortages and motivation. In the DET, the large and centralised HR department is linked to schools through district directors and principals.

Moderate evidence of dedicated HR department was found at five sites; three large independent and two large catholic schools. HR Managers / Officers were not considered part of the executive team, but reported to the Staff Directors. In these circumstances, HR managers/officers were not directly involved in strategic planning, but rather engaged in mostly operational HR roles. As such, their involvement in strategic planning was limited to providing supporting HR data to senior management. In one small independent and one medium catholic school, HR functions were managed by a leadership team because the schools lacked dedicated HR staff.

Having dedicated HR staff was a relatively recent development in the schools, but all sites confirmed that having human resources staff or leadership with the skills and knowledge to implement strategies that fit well with the vision and mission of the organisation added value to the school. This fits with literature findings that having

dedicated HR staff who are involved in the strategic planning process benefits the organisation by aligning the human capacity to support strategic initiatives (Milcovich and Boudreau 1991; Nankervis et al. 1999; Tompkins 2002). However, some sites preferred that the HR manager / officer reported to a Director of Staff who possessed experience as a teacher and the Director of staff was on the management team of the school.

In such sites, the HR manager was not part of the management team as there was difficulty in accepting someone without a teaching background and the director of staff managed the strategic aspects of HR management. Furthermore, the degree of acceptance of a direct strategic role for the HR department was seen to vary from school to school. Much of this differentiation depended on the principal's disposition. This was based on the perception that the principal understood contemporary HR approaches and the perception that non-teaching HR personnel had limited teaching skills to contribute to the school management body.

#### **5.2.4 Vertical and Horizontal Alignment**

Strong evidence of vertical and horizontal alignment was evident if clear links between organisational objectives, HR policies and HR procedures existed. Three sites, made up of one large independent school, one large catholic school and the DET had strong evidence of the HR functions being vertically aligned with the strategic objectives and procedures. These functions working in harmony with each other go to show there was horizontal integration. Five sites (three large independent, one large and one medium catholic school) had moderate evidence of alignment. They were either working to enhance vertical alignment with strategic objectives (independent schools), or had their HR procedures vertically aligned with central office objectives and policies, but could

not demonstrate horizontal integration (catholic schools).

One large independent school showed weak evidence of alignment but the HR policies to achieve alignment were under development. All sites acknowledged that there was room for improving vertical alignment and horizontal integration and doing this would return benefits, as suggested in literature (Cascio 2006; Fisher et al. 2006; Beardwell 2007).

### **5.2.5 Overall Level of SHRM Implementation in Schools**

The preceding subsections have discussed the degree of evidence of the four components of SHRM. These results were combined to give a composite measure of the overall level of SHRM implementation in the school systems as required by the first research question. Strategic HRM in the ten participating school organisations or case study sites were at different levels of implementation. Two large independent, two large catholic schools and the Department of Education showed a strong uptake of SHRM. Another three large independent schools and one medium catholic school showed moderate uptake of SHRM. The last case (one small independent school) showed weak uptake of SHRM.

The findings suggest that the degree of SHRM implementation weakens as the school size reduces, which arguably supports the proposal in the conceptual model that size is a factor that moderates the degree of SHRM implementation. The larger private schools had the strongest evidence for SHRM being in place and believed that these strategies and the culture they support benefited them in attracting and retaining teachers. Other primarily identified contingency factors, (Kydd and Oppenheim 1990; Anthony et al. 2002) such as location and the associated prestige and socio-economic

environment were checked, but whether Location moderated the extent of SHRM could not be fully verified as none of remotely located independent and or catholic schools were in the case study sample.

In the public sector, SHRM existed at the central metropolitan located head office but not at the local school level, regardless of the location. Furthermore, the conceptual model had also identified school ownership as a moderating factor, but the results did not support the argument that ownership moderates the degree of SHRM uptake in the schools. The extent of SHRM uptake was similar across the sectors. Instead, the study identified the new moderating factor, principal's disposition, which as already described in 5.2.3 is responsible for principals accepting or rejecting a strategic role for HR in their schools.

The importance of aligning the SHRM processes and practices cannot be overstated (Kramar 1999; Armstrong 2000a; Lansbury 2003; Cascio 2006). Given the diversity of operational demands in the WA public sector schools, it is difficult for a one size fits all approach to meet the needs at the school level. The central level has a well structured SHRM system, but devolvement to school level is affected by practical and local issues. Some components have been devolved to the schools, for example, principals at the local level can hire staff, but they do not have autonomy in terms of financial and or management control. For SHRM to be truly effective it needs greater devolution (Colley and Price 2008), with appropriate professional support, so that schools are able to align the human resource practices to their own specific needs.

The smaller private schools also suffer similar problems of lack of resources at the local level and have weak to moderate overall evidence of SHRM uptake. However, they did not have weak evidence on all four components of SHRM. The main areas of weakness were in strategic planning, absence of dedicated HR departments and the vertical alignment of policies, except in the mission statements and strategic objectives where this was in place. These statements indicated they knew and understood their purpose, although how well this translated operationally throughout the organisation is unclear.

As already discussed, the size of these small organisations would make it difficult to support the requirements of a full strategic planning process and dedicated HR department so a wholesale take-up of a comprehensive industry approach is probably neither appropriate, nor cost-effective. The above fits with the contingency approach, which suggests organisations choose systems and strategies that are most appropriate and the best fit for their specific situations (Kydd and Oppenheim 1990; Anthony et al. 2002). In addition, this matches Nankervis and colleagues (1999), contention that SHRM theories cannot be separated from the socio-economic, political and industrial relations climates in which they operate. The findings thereby support the concept of the school model of SHRM, (section 2.5.2) which is an abridged version of the industry model (section 2.4.1).

Schools signal their intent to be employers of choice by implementing a SHRM approach and some of the private schools have chosen this strategy to protect them from teacher shortage threats. Certainly, those private schools that have a strong evidence of SHRM have fared better in this regard than others, although this is not the only reason

for that outcome. It has to be acknowledged however that there can be considerable disparity between schools, both within and across each of the sectors studied. Clearly, socio-economic differences and cultural diversity in terms of the schools operating environment will affect the student cohorts, the teaching environment, the attractiveness of teaching in a given school and the resources available. Nonetheless, evidence from broader industry clearly shows that SHRM provides a way of maximising the benefits to employees, by building a culture of commitment (Storey 1997) with improved loyalty for the organisation and quality of work life for the employee (Cascio 2006).

### **5.3 Teacher Attraction and retention**

The second research question investigated if the strategic application of human resource management functions such as appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and rewards influence teacher attraction and retention in WA schools. The conceptual framework from literature shown in section 2.6, Figure 2.4, highlighted that the outcome, namely teacher attraction and retention, are directly dependent on the above four human resource management functions. The findings confirmed these four human resource management functions as sub-factors under ‘working conditions’ which is a major factor influencing teacher attraction and retention. Also the outcome could be moderated by other major factors, namely personal characteristics, school conditions, school location, perceptions that teaching is unappealing, alternative employment, and curriculum and extraneous demands. Further discussion also splits the desired outcome into separate attraction and retention results, with the above influencing factors regrouped accordingly based on their dominant area of influence.

The study confirmed that the teacher shortage problems in WA are specific to some subjects and locations, and these problems are likely to be exacerbated over time. Areas of teacher shortages are in the secondary subjects of Mathematics, Science, Design Technology, LOTE and the areas of female gender bias in primary schools. An ageing teaching population is an issue in all metropolitan schools. These findings are consistent with several published materials on teacher shortages (MCEETYA 1999; DEST 2003; DETWA 2007; Hiatt 2007a).

During the time of this study, a booming mining industry worsened the problem in the North Pilbara/Kimberley. However the 2008/9 global economic downturn has led to more graduates accepting jobs, fewer teachers retiring and reduction in the number of people leaving the WA department of education (ABC 2009). This is however a short term improvement, as there is still a shortage of mathematics teachers and male primary school teachers, and the teacher shortage problems will become serious over the long term as the 26 per cent of teachers aged over 55 would retire in the coming years (Perpitch 2009).

Overall, the findings of this study identified that shortages ranged from minor to moderate in the independent and catholic schools. The large private schools are working towards implementing 'employer of choice' strategies to make them more attractive employers. Their strategies include reliance on attractive school location/conditions or working conditions (metropolitan location, competitive salary structures, good leave entitlements and good personal development [PD], ethos and caring workplace) and good educational reputation, such as students' performance, positive publicity, branding, to attract and retain staff. The smaller schools tend to rely on the communal atmosphere



in the school and teachers intrinsic characteristics being aligned to the school philosophy or religious ethos, as key strategies for helping attract and retain staff. Although the government schools employ several strategies, they experience moderate to major teacher shortage problems with major attraction and retention problems in regional/remote locations and moderate problems in metropolitan schools.

The respondents to this research agreed that SHRM implementation would help bring about positive influences on teacher attraction / retention, if school organisations were willing to create the needed enabling environment. This could include a willingness to increase the involvement of HR in the strategic management of teaching staff, and to switch from traditionally preferred options to more business-oriented alternatives to improve teacher attraction / retention. Schools need to develop new policies or alter existing HR policies to achieve better teacher attraction and retention rates.

Although, a human resource management model can offer schools unrivalled opportunities, this alone might not deliver the required teacher attraction and retention goals. This research has generated a suite of factors that are likely to influence teacher attraction and retention; however, the solution requires a combination of these that address the complexities of teachers' motivations and their work environment. Participants in all case studies ranked the factors they believed most important to improve attraction and retention.

The retired teachers ranking was an important contribution, as this group were long serving teachers and perhaps more representative of teachers. Collectively, the

most important influential factors, ranked from 1 to 7, with 1 being the most influential, were as follows. First was working conditions, followed by personal characteristics of teachers, school conditions, living conditions in the area where school is located or school location. Fifth was the perception that teaching is unappealing / unattractive. Next was alternative employment opportunities, and seventh was the Curriculum and other extraneous demands.

‘Working conditions’ was rated the most important, which supports the conceptual model’s proposition that sub-factors such as appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward, directly influence teacher attraction and retention. The remaining six groups such as personal characteristics, school conditions, school location, perception that teaching is unappealing, alternative employment and curriculum / extraneous demands were also identified as important, though less so than ‘working conditions’. This suggests these conditions moderate ‘working conditions’ in achieving the teacher attraction and retention outcomes. These findings differ from the relationships in the original conceptual framework.

Depending on their direct influence, the attraction and retention motivators can be split. The above seven most important ranked factors could thus be grouped into separate attraction and retention categories, based on the dominant area of influence. Each directly or indirectly affects both attraction and retention. The dominant attractors to teach in a school, in order of decreasing importance would arguably be the personal characteristics, the school location, perception that teaching is unappealing / unattractive, and alternative employment opportunities. On the other hand, the

categories that influence retention of teachers in a school would be working conditions, school conditions, and curriculum and extraneous demands.

Eighty-nine percent (89%) of the teachers surveyed emphasised they were attracted to teaching because of intrinsic personal characteristics. The reasons ranged from enjoying working with children, finding teaching intellectually fulfilling, or that teaching helps them contribute to society or to work in a subject area they loved or they were happy with having a positive impact as role models. In addition, an indirect relationship existed between the participants' personal characteristics and their intentions to remain in the teaching profession. Seventy-one percent (71%) of participants planned to remain in teaching for longer than 2 years. Twenty-nine percent (29%) desired an immediate change of career from teaching, and these respondents placed the least importance on intrinsic motivational factors compared to those wishing to stay.

Sixty-one percent (61%) of the survey participants viewed extrinsic rewards in the form of working conditions as important. Extrinsic factors include opportunities for professional development, good job security, very reasonable salaries and benefits and good promotional prospects. Overall, working conditions are important influences on retention, once the personal characteristics are satisfied. In regards to location, no participants wanted to continually work in the remote locations. Yet with the right conditions of posting (working conditions), 23%, 10% and 16% of the participants in the early, mid and / or advanced career levels respectively, indicated they would be happy to work in the remote areas for periods ranging from 2-years to 1 year or for short periods of one term. This knowledge should be useful for developing appropriate

strategies for addressing shortage in the remote locations.

The factor, curriculum and extraneous demands in the form of overemphasis on reporting and assessment continue to affect retention of teachers. In relation to school conditions, the retired teachers felt that having the right culture is very important in the school, as teachers are more likely to stay if they feel supported within their subject department / school. They also stressed leadership and the absence of aligned management - teacher objectives also affected retention of teachers. Furthermore, the perception of teaching as a low profile profession in the eye of the community does not help in the attraction of new teachers. Finally, alternative employment opportunities were also found to moderate retention. The findings suggested that teachers who leave for alternative professions are often those who came in to teaching for the wrong reasons such as flexible hours and holidays, teaching suited their family needs, whilst some studied teaching because that was all they could get into.

The foregoing findings on factors that influence attraction / retention of teachers are generally consistent with the literature on what attracts teachers and the reasons why they leave. These can be intrinsic reasons (Hunt 2002; CRTTE 2003; Skilbeck and Connell 2003) , or perceived low status of teaching (Troman and Woods 2000; Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004) which affect attraction. Stress related conditions in schools (Fullan 2001), or workplace conditions are examples of those factors which affect the retention of good people (Buckingham 2008).

Different strategies were suggested for improving attraction and retention. For instance, in regards to personal characteristics, strategies are needed to identify and

attract to the profession people with the right intrinsic personal characteristics. This may include investigation into the peculiarities of the generational characteristics that could be tapped, such as finding ways to attract generation Y as young teachers. A similar study had investigated the work-related differences and similarities of Generation X and Baby Boomer employees in the public sector and the implications for human resource functions such as recruiting, retention, motivation and training (Jurkiewicz 2000).

Strategies to attract teachers to remote school locations need to be ingenious and creative - the older staff or the grey army of teachers near or in retirement could be targeted with short term contracts as part of their around Australia travels. Strategies to address the perception that teaching is unappealing include promoting teaching in a more positive light and recognising the job teachers do to enhance perceptions about the profession and make it more attractive. Incentives to attract and encourage career change into teaching from competing professions, for example, engineering, accounting or commerce could help as a strategy to guard against alternative employment threats from these industries. Similarly, scholarship programs to attract students in Mathematics and Science areas would help. A perfect timing would be to use the ongoing world financial crisis to show that teaching offers job security and is a safer career instead of the ups and downs of the private sector (Rout 2009).

Strategies for altering the school condition could include creating an environment or culture that is friendly and supportive. Another could be to reduce the workload on early career teachers. Easing them with the career and reducing or better managing the expectations on them could create a better environment for their retention. Participants suggested, for curriculum and extraneous demands, the need to minimise

implementing changes for the sake of change, including reduced overemphasis on excessive reporting and assessment as retention strategies. Under working conditions, effective deployment of strategic elements of HRM would be required. Implementing changes in the form of strategic appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and rewards were also suggested as ways of improving the retention of teachers and these are discussed in the subsections that follow.

### **5.3.1 Appraisal and Performance Management Strategies**

Purpose designed annual appraisal processes that are goal or achievement-based and had development components (either formal or informal) would help improve general retention. For early career teachers, regular feedback and special performance appraisal process could help them reflect on their progress. These findings are consistent with the principles set out in the literature recommending the appraisal process matches the nature of the organisation (Bunting 2005) and should include development of necessary competencies (Fisher 2005) to correct any identified weaknesses (Go`mez-Mejia et al. 2004).

### **5.3.2 Professional Development Strategies for Teachers**

Professional development (PD) strategies need to consider the relevance, timing and method of PD events. HR professionals could have a role in assisting / coaching line managers on developing suitable employee retention strategies. PD strategies need to be geared towards teachers' particular work needs or their areas of interest. This could include subject area, other accreditations such as leadership, or other special needs of interest like encouraging a higher degree in a relevant teaching area.

Professional development and support for early teachers was a common suggestion throughout the research. Providing a more extensive induction program increases awareness of the demands of teaching, for example, the current WACOT beginning teachers' seminar. As well as more mentoring, ongoing, intense and more focused PD should be considered in the first one to two years of teaching, to ensure early career teachers are 'getting it right'. This is even more so for early career country teachers. Another area to be addressed is professional development for LOTE teachers, as some are currently not well trained or supported.

The need for PD spreads to all teachers but it is also encouraged to involve school principals into this activity. Professional development for principals should include relationship building skills, particularly for supporting teachers in remote areas. An effective PD approach that ensures individuals are equipped with the required competencies can also help eliminate staleness or ineffectiveness as recommended by (Bernardin 2007; Noe et al. 2007). This in turn contributes to better teacher performance (Ingarvarson and Chadbourne 1994) and ultimately benefits employee turnover rates and the ability to respond to changes in the environment or the organisation (Bohlander and Snell 2007).

### **5.3.3 Recruitment and Selection Strategies**

More independence to allow public schools to recruit their own teachers, rather than relying solely on central recruitment processes, may improve retention of teachers. Planning strategies that would help include much earlier identification of job openings and earlier placing of advertisements for positions than is currently experienced. Selection criteria that identify and employ people who are attracted to the teaching

profession for intrinsic reasons even if they do not make the full entry requirements could improve retention. Implementing strategies that address the generational characteristics of young teachers is another strategy to improve the eventual retention of these teachers. These strategies are in line with the literature suggestion that recruitment and selection should emphasise a person - organisation (P - O) fit (Higgins 2002). Higher employee satisfaction and commitment occur when there is a close fit between individual strengths and interests and organisational / job characteristics and culture (Nankervis et al. 1999; Cascio 2006; Gronfeldt and Strother 2006) .

#### **5.3.4 Reward System Strategies**

Although some participants felt that teachers' pay was adequate, the consensus was that improved pay would make teaching more competitive and give the profession better standing, thereby improving attraction and retention. In addition, changes to the superannuation laws could encourage people to stay longer and improve retention. Differentiated rewards by areas of need and by teacher type were also considered important. These could include Financial incentives for teachers in the areas of shortage, such as Mathematics and Science graduates, special allowance for teaching in remote / or regional areas. It is acknowledged that the WA government offered teachers pay rises of up to 21.7 per cent, making them the country's highest paid, and teachers would be rewarded with allowances of up to \$19,000 to work in remote schools, \$4000 to work in country schools and \$3000 in difficult-to-staff metropolitan schools (O'Brien 2008).

Another group of incentives could be to assist young female teachers who wish to take time out to start a family, and more support to facilitate a return to teaching, particularly for young teachers in remote areas as they get married and have a family.



According to WA Chamber of Commerce and Industry, one of the most significant factors for attracting and retaining female workers is flexibility in the workplace, as flexible arrangements provide women with greater opportunities to balance work and family responsibilities (Nicolaou 2009). Another strategy for staffing schools in the regions could entail compulsory postings in the country for a period followed by reward of a posting to a school of personal choice.

The Literature recommends that organisations employ different reward strategies, both financial and non financial rewards to attract, retain and motivate the workforce (Go`mez-Mejia and Balkin 1992; Nankervis et al. 1999; Michelson and Kramar 2003; Harris 2005; Cascio 2006). However, for WA, making teacher salaries attractive is important, but it should be affordable from the government budget perspective and considered in the context of broader reform to the education system (Nicolaou 2008). Implementing the above strategies within the WA school sector would satisfy both the extrinsic and intrinsic needs of teachers resulting in improved attraction and retention. As HR is relatively new in schools another strategy is to maintain a HR network or interest group specific to education as a forum for sharing ideas or strategies to enhance attraction / retention of teachers.

## **5.4 Limitations**

There are a number of limitations. This section acknowledges these limitations. Although the aim of the study is to develop a suitable model of SHRM that will be applicable for schools in Western Australia and broadly across other education systems outside the State, the study covered only schools in Western Australia. Although the other Australian States face similar issues, the pre-2008 mining boom and extent of

remoteness in WA has presented some unique problems. Similar research across a wider field would help test the generalisability of this research to a wider cross section of schools in other states across Australia. Another dimension could include other countries.

This study did not examine how a fully decentralised school-level SHRM could be implemented within the centralised public school or partly devolved Catholic sectors. Providing greater autonomy to school principals and giving them flexibility to develop a school culture, manage performance, and provide accountability for operational issues such as staffing, assets, resources and financial management could improve effectiveness (Nicolaou 2008), provided they were given adequate assistance to support this. Previous research in the UK has indicated that involving local HR professionals in the recruitment / selection, appraisal, development and reward / recognition of teachers aids best practice (Grieves and Hanafin 2005). Nonetheless supporters of decentralised systems need to ensure it does not result in “loss of centralised understanding of the composition of the workforce as a whole” (Colley and Price 2008: 91) which is important for workforce planning in large public sector agencies.

Independent and catholic schools located outside the metropolitan area were not part of study, so the extent that location moderates SHRM implementation in this group could not be verified. Neither did this study examine the relationship between teacher attraction / retention and the different measures of school outcomes, such as financial and educational outcomes, as these were outside the scope of this research. Cascio (2006) advises that the financial benefits of SHRM can be quantified, however this was also beyond the scope of this study.

A few methodological shortcomings were identified. For instance, the main methodology applied was qualitative because of the need to construct the reality from data gathered in a natural setting as recommended by Denzin and Lincoln (2000) and Lincoln and Guba (2002). This approach allows the researcher to explore the respondents' view of that reality. The conceptual schema however sought to understand the relationships between dependent, independent and moderating factors and gives indications of the interrelationships. A qualitative methodology is unable to model the relationships as a quantitative approach could.

The research followed a multi-method strategy with multiple data gathering procedures and involved multiple categories of participants, which enhances the validity and reliability of the findings (Merriam 1998; Davis 2005; Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Nonetheless, as Ary and colleagues (2006) point out, the small sample sizes of some of the procedures raise questions as to how generalisable the results are to other settings. For instance, only a limited number of teachers (thirty-one) participated in the teacher survey. In addition, the findings could be biased by individual respondents' perceptions and experiences as ten of the thirteen participants in the case studies were HR professionals in the school environment. These suggest a more extensive analysis of SHRM and teacher attraction / retention using a wider cross-section and a larger number of related school professions may be warranted.

Finally, ranking the seven categories or groups of attraction and retention influencing factors, namely, working conditions, personal characteristics of teachers, school conditions, school location, perception that teaching is unappealing / unattractive, alternative employment opportunities, and curriculum / extraneous

demands did not fully reflect the relative importance of the sub-factors under these seven groups. Examples of these sub-factors are appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward under ‘working conditions’; age, gender, religious/philosophical affiliation under ‘personal characteristics of teachers’; for ‘alternative employment opportunities’, the impact of threats from other industries or attrition due to inter-sector / school movements; etc. Section 4.2.3 provides more examples of the sub-factors. Additional research may be needed to fully understand the relative importance of each of these sub-factors. As one participant noted, some of the sub-factors in a category may be more important than others, even if the associated categories were ranked differently.

Despite the above limitations, this study is one of the first to investigate the subject of SHRM implementation in the school systems and the significance of this research is that it sheds light on how SHRM and its benefits could be implemented more effectively within schools. The implications for current HR practice and future research activities are presented next.

## **5.5 Contributions to Current and Future Work**

The main findings and limitations from this study form the basis for discussions on the existing human resource management practice in the school environment and further research respectively. This section thus highlights the contributions of the research to the development of theory to support current practice of human resource management in schools and suggests the scope for future research on the subject.

### **5.5.1 Contributions to Current Theory and Practice**

The following prompts identified the contribution this research makes to the theory and practice of human resource management in school systems. The prompts, namely what is new, what is improved, or what is modified are similar to the framework for evaluating the contributions of research suggested in literature (Whetten 1989). This research being among the first to investigate if and how strategic human resource management is implemented within the Western Australian school sector offers insights into what is required to strategically align human resource practices in that sector. It also identifies how strategic implementation of human resource functions could bring about improvements in the attraction and retention of teachers.

The suggested school model of SHRM, which is an abridged version of the full-scale industry model, should provide a simple and pragmatic framework to guide practitioners in the implementation of strategic human resource management in their local school systems. The four key requirements, namely: an established strategic planning process; a clear statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives; the existence of a dedicated HR department; and the vertical alignment and horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices form the building blocks a school needs to set up to help it strategically manage its human resources.

School size, because of resources and support requirements, moderates the degree of implementation of SHRM. Conversely, small schools are encouraged to take up SHRM, even if they can only do this to a lesser degree, to enable them reap the benefits of strategically managing their human resources. The finding where some schools did not embrace a strategic role for the HR manager / officer in the school

environment because of the moderating factor, principal's disposition, is a caution for the enthusiastic SHRM theorists and practitioners. Where principals were favorably disposed to the concept, it was encouraging to note the interest shown towards SHRM, and the growing number of dedicated HR practitioners being employed within these schools.

Understanding the complexities of teachers' motivations and the seven attributes of the work environment that influence teacher attraction and retention is important. Understanding the relative importance of these can help practitioners prioritise and design appropriate attraction and retention strategies. For instance, if schools attract the teachers that satisfy the right personal characteristics, these teachers would stay in the profession if reasonable working conditions are in place. The relationship between personal characteristics and intentions to stay or leave the teaching profession is useful as human resource practitioners could use 'personal characteristics' surveys to predict the retention potential of the teaching workforce in their schools. They could also use this knowledge to develop attraction and retention levers.

Furthermore, the finding where participants (including some early career teachers) would be happy to work for a 2-year period or less in the remote areas, subject to the right conditions of posting (working conditions) is useful knowledge. This could help practitioners in developing appropriate strategies for addressing shortage in the remote locations. Finally, all the suggested strategies for improving teacher attraction and retention could guide practitioners as they formulate further improvement initiatives.

### **5.5.2 Implications for Future Research**

The generalisability of the findings has been raised as one of its limitations. Further research could be in the form of a similar study using a wider cross section of schools or participants, or in other states across Australia and if possible in other countries, to verify the generalisation of the findings. Future study could examine how fully decentralised school-level SHRM could be implemented within the centralised public school sector or in those private schools with centralised or partly devolved systems.

The full influence of the principal's disposition on the take up of SHRM in the school requires additional study. Some principals did not see a strategic role for the HR manager / officer and staff directors especially if these staff did not have a teaching background. There is also concern that principals, despite having a teaching background, lack the HR competencies or training and yet are tasked with strategic responsibilities. This raises the question of whether HR practitioners in schools need specialised skillsets to take account of the peculiar nature of schools and teachers? Should schools utilise industry based HR professionals or teachers with HR training as school HR managers / staff directors? Would this gain more acceptance of strategic HR in schools? Would industry based HR professionals survive in the school environment? Similarly, could the introduction of SHRM be stalled by the existing mindsets in schools? Follow-on research needs to be undertaken in this area.

Understanding the link between SHRM and school learning outcomes would help reinforce the need for SHRM in school systems. Further research could investigate the relationship between teacher attraction / retention, and different measures of learning outcomes and quantify the financial cost of implementing school SHRM

strategies, vis-à-vis the financial benefit of teachers being retained. Future research could complement the current qualitative study into the interrelationships between the SHRM factors and teacher attraction / retention.

If required, additional research may be warranted to investigate the relative importance of the sub-factors under each category of the attraction and retention influencing factors to provide a more detailed picture. Also, where high-level strategies have been recommended to improve attraction and retention, practitioners would need to develop more specific actions or tactics to implement these in each school situation. This may require specific research that will support the development of new policies or the alteration of existing HR policies to realise the attraction and retention goals. Finally, another area of research could involve investigating the concept of strategic recruitment and selection in other industries where attraction and retention strategies are based on intrinsic motivation aligned to the personal characteristics of the individual, for example not-for-profit organisations and certain public sectors such as nursing.

## **5.6 General Summary**

The objectives of the research were to explore the level of implementation of strategic human resource management (SHRM) within the school sector in Western Australia and investigate if the utilisation of strategically applied HR functions such as appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward can deliver improvements in teacher attraction and retention.

Data was gathered in two stages; a preliminary Delphi study exploratory phase during 2005 and 2006, and a case study phase undertaken during 2006 and 2007 using



multiple sites, multiple procedures and multiple participants. The multiple methods allowed for triangulation, which helped overcome the bias and narrowness of a single method approach. The model of SHRM developed for the school sector directly depended on four key requirements, namely an established strategic planning process; a clear, written or unwritten statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives; the existence of a dedicated HR department; and the vertical alignment and horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices.

The degree of implementation of SHRM varied depending on the school size and principal's disposition. The larger private schools had the strongest evidence of SHRM in place, whilst the smaller private schools suffer from the problem of lack of resources at the local level and had weak to moderate evidence of overall SHRM uptake. In the public sector, SHRM existed at the central level. The Principal's disposition, manifest in principals accepting or rejecting a strategic role for the HR department in their schools also moderated the degree of SHRM implementation. Schools where principals were favorably disposed to the concept evidenced a higher level of SHRM. Although the study could not verify whether school location moderated the extent of SHRM, overall, the findings fit with the contingency approach (Kydd and Oppenheim 1990; Nankervis et al. 1999; Anthony et al. 2002) and support the proposed school model of SHRM, which is a simplified version of the industry model.

The study confirmed Western Australia's teacher shortage problems as largely subject and location specific, and shortages range from minor to moderate in the independent and catholic schools and moderate to major in public schools. The shortage problems were worsened by the boom in the mining industry during the time of this

study. However, recent economic slowdown negatively affected the mining industry with decline in the high paid low skilled jobs such as truck driving, but has had a short-term effect of reduced teacher shortage.

For instance, over 700 WA graduate teachers were considered jobless at the start of the 2009 school year and teacher vacancies had dropped from 134 in 2008 to eight (8) in 2009 (Lampathakis 2009). Although the downturn has stopped the tide of teachers leaving, the teacher shortage problems would worsen over the long term, thus supporting the continued relevance of the findings of this study. Furthermore, because all economies go through periods of boom and downturn which affect manpower supply and demand, attraction and retention will remain an issue (Thite 2006).

The respondents agreed that the implementation of SHRM would help improve teacher attraction / retention, but organisations needed to be willing to involve HR in the strategic management of teaching staff. The seven factors that most influenced attraction and retention of teachers, ranked in order of importance were working conditions, personal characteristics of teachers, school conditions, school location, perception of teaching as unappealing or unattractive, alternative employment opportunities and lastly the curriculum and extraneous demands.

Of these categories, the factors influencing attraction are personal characteristics, the school location, the perception that teaching is unappealing / unattractive, and alternative employment opportunities. Working conditions, school conditions, and curriculum and extraneous demands are the categories influencing the retention of teachers in a school. As organisations need to attract, retain, motivate and

develop the talent it needs as part of its talent management and employer of choice processes (Armstrong and Murlis 2004), schools need to implement strategies to address the above influencing factors.

Strategies for improving attraction include those needed to identify and attract people with the right intrinsic personal characteristics to the profession. Attracting teachers to remote school locations could be to target the older staff or teachers near or in retirement with short - term contracts during their tour around Australia. Promoting teaching in a more positive light and recognising the job teachers do could enhance perceptions about the profession and make it more attractive. Incentives to attract and encourage career change into teaching from engineering, accounting or commerce graduates or experienced professionals could help guard against alternative employment threats from these professions.

Retention strategies could include creating an environment or culture that is friendly and supportive, reducing the workload on early career teachers or better managing the expectations on them to create a better environment for their retention. Minimising excessive reporting and assessment can reduce the burden on teachers as a retention strategy. Within 'working conditions', the deployment of appropriate strategic appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward within the framework of an SHRM model would bring about needed improvements in the retention of teachers. Strategies to improve retention in the areas of shortage, such as specific subject teachers, retention strategies for remote locations, early career teachers and to overcome general teacher shortages have been recommended. Practitioners can derive specific policies and guidelines from these

generic strategies for adoption in their school environments.

To conclude, this research has met its objectives and produced a model for SHRM that is appropriate for the school sector. This is an abridged version of the type employed in the industry as identified by (Nankervis et al. 1999). This is founded on the four key requirements, namely: an established strategic planning process; a clear, written or unwritten statement of the organisation's mission and strategic objectives; the existence of a dedicated HR department; and the vertical alignment and horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices recommended by (Tompkins 2002). Suitable strategies practitioners could apply to improve the attraction and retention of teachers in schools are recommended, notably the use of appropriate appraisal and performance management, professional development, recruitment and selection, and reward strategies implemented within the framework of an SHRM model. For instance, recruitment and selection strategies within an SHRM framework would entail practices which are *“aligned with and integrated into the strategic planning process ... and involve the translation of mission statements and / or strategic plans into those employee attributes which are seen to be critical to their successful attainment”* (Millmore 2003: 91).

The study has identified how SHRM and its benefits could be implemented more effectively within schools. The effective implementation of SHRM provides an opportunity for improving teacher attraction and retention, as it has done in other industries. This would assist schools to better achieve their outcomes, benefiting the community as a whole. The staff of an organisation are the *“assets on which competitive advantage is built, whether in the public or private sector, whether in the corporate world*

*or in the world of education. ... So human resource management and the practices associated with it have become accepted by managers in all forms of organisations as one of the most important strategic levers to ensure continuing success” (Smith 2006: 4). A model of SHRM for the education sector would not only benefit schools within Western Australia, it would have a broader application to other education systems.*

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 3.1: Delphi Study Cover letter and Round 1 Questions**

**Dear Participant,**

#### **Delphi Study Round 1**

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this Delphi study aimed at gaining consensus from a panel of experts involved in the school sector in relation to the following two topics;

1. The effectiveness of the current human resource management policies in helping schools achieve their outcomes and
2. Strategies that you believe could improve the attraction and retention of teachers in Western Australia.

The Delphi study will consist of 2 – 4 electronic e-mailed questionnaires starting with open-ended questions for the first round. The results of each round will be analysed and fed back to you. For subsequent rounds, participants will be asked to re-examine their opinions in the light of consensus reached in earlier rounds.

The questions for the first round are attached to this e-mail. Please provide answers as fully as possible. Upon completion of the questionnaire, we would appreciate receiving your answers preferably via e-mail to [j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au) before **Friday 9 December 2005**.

Questions for the second round will be sent out 1 week after the due date for receiving completed questionnaires for the first round and a similar pattern will be followed for any subsequent rounds.

If you have any questions about this project please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Jennifer Ashiedu on 9360 2557 or my supervisors, Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd on 9360 6028 or Associate Professor Lanny Entrekin on 9360 2528.

We are looking forward to your valued views.

Regards,

Jennifer Ashiedu

### **QUESTIONS FOR DELPHI STUDY PHASE – ROUND ONE**

Delphi Study will involve 2-4 rounds of electronic e-mail questionnaires. Questions for Round 1 are shown below. For the subsequent Rounds, the questionnaire will be modified and re-focused based on the responses received from Round 1.

**Please answer all questions.**

*Teacher shortage, as a worldwide phenomenon manifests itself in various ways in different countries. The issues are not just about numbers, but also of teacher quality. Teacher shortage therefore” exists when employers cannot fill their desired number of positions from the start of the school year with appropriately qualified staff at the going wages”.*

1. Do you think teacher shortages are a major problem for primary and secondary schools in Western Australia? Can you please explain why?

*Researchers in other industries have found that a strategic approach to Human Resources Management provides a competitive advantage and improved performance for organisations. Strategic human resource management (SHRM) has been defined as an “approach to employee management where human resource policies and functions (such as recruitment and selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance management) are linked to the organisation’s business goals.”*

2. Please explain how this model works in the school sector, particularly in relation to attracting and retaining teachers in the teaching profession across Western Australia
3. Do you think the current human resource management practices within the school sector are adequate and effective in helping to attract and retain teachers in Western Australia? Please explain your answer.
4. Can you please identify and explain at least three (3) human resource management practices, which you think might improve teacher attraction and retention through closing the gaps indicated in question 3 above.

End of Questionnaire

Thank you very much for participating

## Appendix 3.2: Delphi Study Round 2 Questions

Dear Participant,

### Delphi Study Round 2

We wish to thank you for responding to the Round 1 questions of the Delphi study. All the responses have now been reviewed and analysed. Your responses to the questions were very important and have made it possible for us to move to Round 2 of the study.

The questions for the second round are attached to this e-mail. You will be pleased to see that the questionnaire format is different from Round 1 and appear simpler to complete.

Please provide answers to all questions. Upon completion of the questionnaire, we would appreciate receiving your answers preferably via e-mail to [j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au) before **Friday 13 January 2006**.

We wish to assure you again that this research is being carried out under strict confidentiality terms and the anonymity of respondents will continue to be protected.

If you have any questions about this project please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Jennifer Ashiedu on 9360 2557 or my supervisors, Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd on 9360 6028 or Associate Professor Lanny Entrekin on 9360 2528.

We are looking forward to your continued and valued contribution to this research.

Regards,

Jennifer Ashiedu

### QUESTIONS FOR DELPHI STUDY PHASE – ROUND TWO

Following completion and analysis of responses to Round 1, questions for Round 2 have been generated based on the responses received from Round 1. Please find below the questions for Round 2.

**Please answer all questions by marking X in the box that correctly describes your opinion. You can provide any additional information in the space provided immediately after each question. Please note that required responses to questions 5 and 10 are different from the others.**

1. Teacher shortage in general is not currently a major problem in WA but would become so in the next 5-10 years if strategies are not implemented to address the issues.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

--

2. Instead of a general shortage in numbers, specific problems have been identified, namely gender bias, staffing schools in regions, shortage in specific learning areas, ageing workforce.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

3. The identified problems in question 2 above vary across sectors with government schools appearing the most affected, whilst independent schools are the least affected.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

4. In WA, the problem of teacher shortage seems to be more with retention than attraction.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

5. Contributory factors to the problem of attraction/retention were identified from Round 1 responses. From research, a statistical model for recruitment/retention has shown that the decision to remain in teaching employment in a school location is a function of several factors. Some of these are listed below for WA. Please rank them in order of importance starting with 1 as most important. You may include any other factors not mentioned that you feel strongly about.

	<b>Contributory Factors to Attraction/Retention Problems</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
A	<b>Personal characteristics of teachers</b> Age Gender Religious/philosophical affiliation Personal motivational factors – love for children, etc	
B	<b>Alternative employment opportunities</b> Other industries Attrition due to inter-sector movements Favourable early retirement packages	



C	<b>Living conditions in the area where school is located</b> Social factors e.g. relationships, etc Economic factors	
D	<b>School conditions</b> Parents economic status Students academic performance Class sizes Work loads School size Organisational culture/school ethos, etc	
E	<b>Working conditions</b> Compensation/reward/recognition schemes Career progression Effective professional development Fair appraisal and performance management	
F	<b>Perception that teaching is unappealing/unattractive</b>	
G	Any other	

6. A feature of the strategic model of human resources management requires that the HR functions (recruitment and selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance management) are linked to the organisation's business goals through strategic planning.

Your school sector (at school, district or state level) prepares annual, medium (5 years) and long-term (10+ years) strategic plans to support the school's goals and teaching workforce projections

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Always	I don't know

7. Responses in Round 1 confirm the existence of HR policies, practices and strategies to address problem areas of teacher attraction/retention. But is this strictly in line with the SHRM model? Sector based summary and opinion on existence of the SHRM model are shown below:

Independent – There is no sector-wide approach. Recruitment and selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance management (including succession planning) are addressed by schools. Independent schools teachers award guidelines available for consultation on e.g. staff appraisal. **SHRM seems not strictly in place.**

Catholic – Catholic Education Council of Western Australia (CECWA) issues policies, but school Principals are ultimately responsible for decision-making and compliance. **SHRM seems not strictly in place.**

Government – Centralised strategic approach to HRM through its SHRM directorate, which aligns workforce planning, recruitment, recognition, development and retention

strategies. **SHRM seems in place at central level only.**

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

8. For strategic HRM to be effective in any sector, it has to be deployed at both central (as appropriate) and local school level.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

9. Effective deployment of strategic HRM can help address some of the factors that contribute to teacher attraction/retention problems (please see question 5 above).

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Additional information (if any)					

10. HR strategies that will help improve WA teacher attraction/retention issues have been provided by the panel in Round 1. Please rank a minimum of seven of the strategies in the order you consider important starting with 1 as most important. You may include any other factors not mentioned that you feel strongly about.

	Strategies to improve teacher attraction/retention in WA	Ranking
A	Provide more focused support for professional learning for teachers in the first one to two years of their career – early professional development. Offer on-the-ground support in the school, designed to respond to teachers' actual needs as well as focusing on government policies. This on-going professional learning should be supported by providing reduced class contact time for the teachers to enable them to plan and assess children's learning, engage in further focused study to enhance practice, and develop positive behaviour management strategies. Mentoring support for newly qualified teachers with skilled and highly regarded senior teacher is also essential.	
B	Provide support for experienced teachers who want to further their professional learning after some years in the profession. For example, provide support in the way of time allocation	

	and fee payment for teachers who want to undertake a masters or doctoral degree. Such further study can re-energise and re-motivate teachers, and help avoid ‘burn out.’	
C	Pay higher salaries. The monetary rewards associated with promotion are puny and the system of promotion is often slow and laborious.	
D	Reduce work load, e.g. minimize combination of teaching with administrative duties, smaller classes, etc.	
E	Enhancing the ethos, culture at the school level, respecting staff – they are a school’s most important asset and many schools treat them as purely replaceable.	
F	Employers (e.g. DET, schools) developing stronger relationships and support with students during their teacher training. For example, quarterly recruitment e-newsletter from the DET disseminated to university students.	
G	Investigate a program confirming employment for high achieving graduates prior to the transfer and appointment process.	
H	Develop mechanisms to reward and retain teachers within their first 1-year, 5 years, 10 years of employment.	
I	Some guarantee of employment in the metropolitan area after a specified time in the country schools.	
J	Additional support for professional development of teachers in their formative years while in the country. Improved cultural awareness of training of teachers new to indigenous communities to ensure they set out on the right foot e.g. Connecting with Culture program of the Catholic sector.	
K	Need for greater recognition of the work teachers do and the stresses of the job. Some form of reward/recognition for their time in the country.	
L	Continued professional development is essential, a work culture that rewards formal learning (e.g. higher degrees) promotional possibilities and greater capacity to allocate time for staff to pursue professional development.	
M	Professional development of new principals in selection processes to ensure that they pick up any difficulties and do not just hire blind. Also, to understand the skill sets of teachers required for best fit of the school.	
N	Schools across all sectors should have the right to recruit staff, and some flexibility in pay and service conditions, etc. Independent schools have that now but Government schools do not.	
O	Any other	

End of Questionnaire

Thank you very much for participating

### **Appendix 3.3: Delphi Study Round 3 Questions**

**Dear Participant,**

#### **Delphi Study Round 3**

We wish to thank you for responding to the Round 2 questions of the Delphi study. All the responses have now been reviewed, analysed and evaluated. Your responses to the questions were very important and have made it possible for us to move to Round 3 of the study, which we anticipate to be the final round.

The objective of this round is two fold, firstly to feedback the result of the analysis and evaluation of Round 2 responses, and secondly to further explore any area with significant differences in respondents' opinions or where there has not been sufficient convergence. The questionnaire for this Round is therefore divided into two parts – (I) and (II). Part (I) mainly discusses the analysis of the Round 2 responses and is therefore for your information. You will be very pleased to note the interesting conclusions. There are no questions to be answered in Part (I). Part (II) has only 6 questions for which your valued answers would be required.

The questionnaire for the third round is attached to this e-mail. Upon completion of the questionnaire, we would appreciate receiving your answers preferably via e-mail to [j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au](mailto:j.ashiedu@murdoch.edu.au) before **Friday 17 February 2006**.

We wish to assure you again that this research is being carried out under strict confidentiality terms and the anonymity of respondents will continue to be protected.

If you have any questions about this project please do not hesitate to contact either myself, Jennifer Ashiedu on 9360 2557 or my supervisors, Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd on 9360 6028 or Associate Professor Lanny Entrekinn on 9360 2528.

We very much appreciate your gesture, continued valued contributions and interesting perspectives that you have brought to this research.

Regards,

Jennifer Ashiedu

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DELPHI STUDY PHASE – ROUND THREE**

Following completion and analysis of responses to Round 2, the study has now entered into Round 3. It is anticipated that this may be the final round. The objective of this round is two fold, firstly to feedback the result of the analysis and evaluation of Round 2 responses, and secondly to further explore any area with significant differences in respondents' opinions or where there has not been sufficient convergence. This Round is therefore divided into two parts – (I) and (II).

#### **PART (I)**

**This part is mainly for information. It discusses the result of the analysis of the responses to the Delphi Round 2 questionnaire and evaluates if consensus has been reached or whether additional clarification will be required in subsequent rounds of this Delphi study phase.**

***THIS PART HAS BEEN OMITTED IN THIS APPENDIX***

### **End of Part (I)**

### **PART (II)**

**Please answer all questions by marking X in the box that correctly describes your opinion. You can provide any additional information in the space provided immediately after each question. Please note that the answering format is different for questions 2, 4 and 6.**

Question 1: Reference to Part (I) question 3. The identified teacher shortage problems do not strictly vary across sectors. Rather it appears that the problems do vary by location with schools in the regions (irrespective of sector type) experiencing both a general shortage in numbers as well as other specific problems namely gender imbalance, shortage in specific learning areas.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Discussion:					

Question 2: Reference to Part (I) question 4. It appears that in WA, the problem of teacher shortage seems to be both with retention as well as attraction. But is one a lesser problem than the other? Although a quantitative investigation will be required to correctly answer this, based on qualitative evidence in your sector, can you please answer for your sector if attraction is a lesser problem than retention (Y if attraction is lesser and N if attraction is not)

Independent	Regional	Y or N
	Metropolitan	Y or N
Catholic	Regional	Y or N
	Metropolitan	Y or N
Government	Regional	Y or N
	Metropolitan	Y or N
Discussion:		

Question 3: With reference to Part (I) question 5, do you agree with the calculated ranking of the broad categories influencing attraction/retention, noting that no singular category can by itself be effective without others and that some of the sub-factors in a category may be more important than others?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
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Discussion:					

Question 4: Reference to Part (I) question 7. This question was to assess if the existing HR policies, practices and strategies in the sectors are in line with the SHRM model. 75% of the respondents agreed (to varying degrees of agreement) and 12.5% disagreed with the statements in the question for several reasons.

To help clarify this issue, guidance will be sought using a WA SHRM framework which was developed for the WA Public Sector by a joint HR industry and academic experts and draws on Australian and international best practice. The framework is intended to assist agencies with integrating the different human resources elements with business strategy in the public sector and outlines the practicalities of integrating SHRM with business outcomes through its five supporting elements, which together provide a holistic approach to business driven SHRM. (Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Government of Western Australia, 2001).

*The framework is shown in the schematic below and the supporting elements are described as follows:*

*Integrating Human Resource Management With Business Outcomes:*

- *Expected business outcomes are determined and communicated to all employees.*
- *Strategic and operational business planning addresses HR issues.*
- *Business strategy is supported by effective HR information systems.*
- *Organisational structure and profile is aligned with business demands.*

*Shaping the working environment:*

- *Conditions of employment are responsive to organisational and employee needs.*
- *Policy and guidelines promote ethical conduct.*
- *Organisational culture and accountability mechanisms exist for the achievement of diversity/respect.*

*Human resourcing:*

- *Strategic and operational business planning determine priorities for HR planning.*
- *Flexible resourcing options are effectively utilised to ensure that the organisation possesses the skills and competencies necessary to meet business demands.*
- *Bias free employee recruitment, selection and induction processes are consistently deployed throughout the organisation.*

*Shared understanding:*

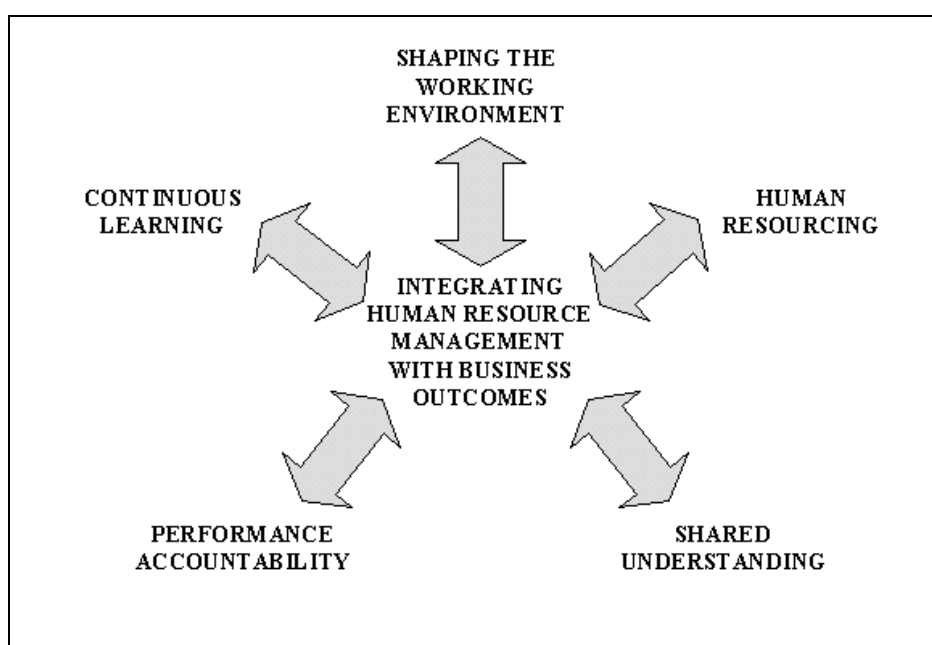
- *Expected business outcomes are determined and communicated to all employees.*
- *Employees are actively involved in strategic and operational business planning.*
- *Communication strategies take account of the different perspectives and levels of understanding within the organisation.*
- *Employees are regularly informed of progress towards the achievement of business outcomes.*

*Performance accountability:*

- *Performance management processes are linked to the achievement of business outcomes as well as individual performance and development needs.*
- *Managers are responsible for coaching and guiding employees as part of performance management processes.*
- *Employees regularly receive feedback from managers and are encouraged to reflect on their contribution to the organisation.*
- *Performance management processes for are consistently deployed throughout the organisation and records are kept so that decisions can be reviewed during appraisal for reward.*

*Continuous learning:*

- *A strategic HR plan incorporates HR development needs and outlines development activities based on business priorities.*
- *Core competencies are identified and skills gaps are systematically addressed.*
- *Performance indicators measure the success of development activities in improving service delivery and meeting business outcomes.*



The extent to which the elements are being employed to manage human resources will determine the extent to which SHRM can be said to be in place in an organisation. The question is to what extent are the SHRM elements described (or their equivalents) being practiced in your sector whether at central, district/system, local school (large or medium-small) level? Please answer on a scale of 1 – 10 (with 1 being SHRM not in place and 10 SHRM fully in place).

Sector	Extent of SHRM in place (Answer 1 – 10)
Independent	
Catholic	
Government	
Discussion:	

Question 5: With reference to Part (I) question 10, do you agree with the calculated ranking of the strategies?

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Fairly correct	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
Discussion:					

Question 6: In line with normal practice, it would be required to present the profile of the expert panel members. Can you please provide a brief outline of your profile especially as it relates to your professional/research experience in human resource management in the educational sector.

Personal Profile:
-------------------

## End of Questionnaire

Thank you very much for participating



## Appendix 3.4: Case Study A and Case study B Questions

### INDEPTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

#### Section A

*Research and experiences have confirmed that Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) provides competitive advantage and improved performance for organisations. SHRM is an “approach to employee management where human resource policies and functions (such as recruitment and selection, appraisal, reward, development and performance management) are linked to the organisation’s business goals.”*

1. A requirement of SHRM is an established strategic planning process. Is strategic planning carried out in your school/organisation? Please describe the process.

*Is the plan written? What are the contents of the plan - internal priorities, strategic goals and objectives? How frequent is the planning done and what time horizon does it cover? Is it centralized or devolved to local school level?*

2. A requirement of SHRM is a clear statement, written or unwritten of the organisation’s mission and strategic objectives to be achieved in pursuit of the mission. Please explain your school/organisation’s current mission statement and strategic objectives.

*Are these communicated to all employees? What do they cover – every aspect of the school business? Are they stated in terms of desired results and appropriate quantitative performance indicators or in terms of the actions required to address emerging areas of concerns in the school?*

3. A requirement of SHRM is a dedicated HR department. Do you have a dedicated HR department? How many employees are in the HR department? What roles does the department play in strategy formulation/implementation? Please explain any 3 examples of key strategic roles of your HR department.

*Is HR involved in strategic planning process? Examples of HR strategic roles (apart from its operational responsibilities): **Adapting to environmental change** – actions taken by HR in response to external events or trends such as tight labour markets, changing demographic characteristics of workforce. **Building human capacity to support strategic initiatives** – human resource planning involving forecasting, future staffing needs, taking steps to recruit new employees or train existing employees to meet forecasted demands. **Changing organisational culture** – the personnel office can play an important role during the reinventing and reengineering of organisations systems and cultures. E.g. redesign of performance appraisal and incentive systems, helping to develop shared commitment to changes in organisational culture driven by different values and requiring different behaviours. **Preparing employees for change** – staff members often resist implementation of major reforms because of implicit or explicit threats to personal security. Hence personnel department in addition to developing the new organisation culture takes steps to prepare employees for the upcoming changes?*

4. A requirement of SHRM is the vertical alignment of personnel policies and practices with the organisation's mission / strategic objectives and the horizontal integration of personnel policies and practices with each other. How are these achieved in your school/organisation?

*How does the HR department consider the personnel-related implications of strategic objectives?*

*Does strategic planning address HR issues and does it determine priorities for HR planning?*

*Are flexible resourcing options effectively utilised to ensure that the organisation possesses the skills and competencies necessary to meet business demands?*

*Does the strategic HR plan incorporate HR development needs and outline development activities based on business priorities?*

*Are performance management processes linked to the achievement of business outcomes as well as individual performance and development needs?*

*Are conditions of employment responsive to organisational and employee need?*

*Studies have shown evidence of teacher shortage problems in WA. These include the threat of a general shortage which will become critical in the next 5 years with the ageing population of the teacher workforce; gender imbalance; staffing schools in regions; shortage in specific learning area; and attrition of early career teachers. Research has suggested that effective deployment of SHRM in schools can help address teacher attraction/retention problems.*

5. In your experience is attracting and retaining adequate numbers of quality teaching staff a problem in WA? Please give examples from your school/organisation.

6. Does your organisation consider effective management of teachers as a source of competitive advantage? How is this reflected in your school/organisation's strategic objectives? Do the strategic objectives address teacher shortage problems in question 5 above?

7. What are the implications of the SHRM approach for influencing teacher attraction / retention, in terms of recruitment and selection strategies, training and development strategies, performance strategies, appraisal strategies, reward system strategies and employee relations strategies? Which of the strategies are locally controlled if your organisation/school structure belongs to a larger central organisation?

*Are you willing to alter your policies and practices so as to attract and retain teachers?*

8. Do you think the current human resource management practices within the school sector are adequate and effective in helping to attract and retain teachers in WA? Please explain your answer.

9. Can you please identify three (3) human resource management practices, which you think might improve general teacher attraction and retention problems.

10. Can you please identify three (3) human resource management practices, which you think might improve retention of early Career teachers.

#### **Section B**

11. Your current position

12. How long have you been in the school sector?

13. Age Range

14. Gender

15. Would your school/organisation like to have a copy of the summarised findings from this research?

**End of Questionnaire**

**Thank you very much for participating**

### Appendix 3.5: Retired Teachers Electronic Interview Questions

The following questions are based on existing literature and the results of an initial study for this research. The research seeks information on how Strategic Human Resources Management may be more effectively implemented in Schools so as improve teacher attraction and retention.

**Thank you for taking the time to complete this Survey. Please answer all questions, and feel free to enlarge your answers in the boxes provided.**

#### Section A

16. Please explain why you think people are attracted to teaching? What attracted you to teaching?

17. *Research suggests that teacher shortage is in general not a current major problem in WA, but the threat of a general shortage exists. This will become critical in the next 5 years with the ageing population of the teacher workforce.* Please explain problems experienced in attracting and retaining skilled and professional teaching staff in schools.

18. *It has been suggested that factors that influence teacher attraction and retention can be ranked in the order listed below (based on perceived degree of importance). Please explain how you would rank the factors.*

- |                 | <i><b>Your Ranking</b></i>  |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| <i><b>1</b></i> | <i><b>Working conditions</b></i>  |  |
| <i><b>2</b></i> | <i><b>School conditions</b></i>   |  |
| <i><b>3</b></i> | <i><b>Living conditions in the area where school is located - School Location</b></i> |  |
| <i><b>4</b></i> | <i><b>Alternative employment opportunities</b></i>                                    |  |
| <i><b>5</b></i> | <i><b>Personal characteristics of teachers</b></i>                                    |  |
| <i><b>6</b></i> | <i><b>Perception that teaching is unappealing/unattractive</b></i>                    |  |

Are there other factors not mentioned that you feel strongly about?

19. How important is professional development in the attraction and retention of teachers in WA schools? Please explain specific professional development strategies for teachers that might help, taking account of various age groups and experience.

20. What role can reward play in addressing teacher shortage in WA schools? Are teachers paid enough?

21. How effective are the ethos and culture of a school in helping to attract and retain teachers in WA?

22. Please explain the extent to which teacher appraisal and performance management could be used to address teacher attraction and retention issues in WA?

23. *Specific teacher shortage problems identified in WA include gender imbalance, staffing schools in regions, and shortage in specific learning areas (Mathematics, Sciences, LOTE).* Please provide a strategy which in your opinion could be effective in addressing each of these problem areas.

## Section B

24. Some brief information on your demographic background will help categorize results. Please circle the response that best fits you.

Sector taught:	Government	<input type="checkbox"/>	Catholic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Independent	<input type="checkbox"/>
Years Worked:	(Less than 5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(5-10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(11-15)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(16-20)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(21 and above)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
School type:	Primary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other	<input type="checkbox"/>
Subject areas:	(Mathematics)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Science)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(LOTE)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(Others)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(Not Applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>		
School location:	Metropolitan	<input type="checkbox"/>	Regional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender:	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Age range:	(20-30)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(31-40)	<input type="checkbox"/>	(41-50)	<input type="checkbox"/>
	(51 and above)	<input type="checkbox"/>				

25. Would you like to have a copy of the summarised findings from this research?  
If Yes, Please provide your preferred mail or e-mail address.

End of Questionnaire

Thank you very much for participating

### Appendix 3.6: Teachers Survey Questions

#### **Investigating Teacher Retention - Can YOU Please Assist?**

A PhD research in the Murdoch University is investigating the implementation of strategic human resource management (SHRM) in schools in Western Australia (WA) and the anticipated outcome is to develop a school based model of SHRM that incorporates human resource management strategies that could help in the attraction and retention of teachers.

The research has been endorsed by the WA Department of Education and Training, Association of Independent Schools of WA and the Catholic Education Commission of WA.

Your participation in this survey is very important because you are a key stakeholder in the field of education. The questions in the survey seek your opinions regarding teacher attraction and retention. There are no right or wrong answers, only your honest opinion is needed. The survey will take about 10 minutes.

**The questionnaire does not require you to personally identify yourself. Information that you provide will remain anonymous, confidential and will not be released by the investigators. The data will only be reported in an aggregated form.**

Thank you for choosing to participate. Your contribution is of great value and is much appreciated.

*Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd / Associate Professor Leland Entrekin / Jennifer Ashiedu*



















**Thank you for taking the time to complete this Survey. Please answer all questions, and feel free to enlarge your answers in the boxes provided.**

#### **SECTION I**

A. The following statements identify a range of reasons why teachers are attracted to and remain in the profession.

**Please use the scale below to RATE the level of importance you personally attach to each of the following statements.**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7                      8

Least or not important	Moderately important
1. I enjoy working with children	- 
2. Teaching is intellectually fulfilling	- 
3. Teaching helps me contribute to society	- 
4. Schools offer educational values	- 
5. My career as a teacher suits my family needs	- 
6. Teaching allows me to work in a subject area I love	- 
7. My own school experiences attracted me to teaching	- 
8. My religious values influenced my decision to teach	- 
9. A teaching recruitment campaign attracted me to teaching	- 
10. Teaching offers me opportunities for professional development	- 
11. The profession offers good promotional prospects	- 
12. Teachers receive positive acknowledgements from society	- 
13. Teachers have a positive impact as role models	- 
14. Access to curriculum materials benefits me as a parent	- 
15. Teaching offers good job security	- 
16. Teachers salaries and benefits are very reasonable	- 
17. Teaching offers me flexible hours and sufficient holidays	- 
18. Teaching provides an opportunity to travel	- 

B. The following strategies have been suggested as ways of improving teacher retention?

Please use the scale below to rate the level of importance you attach to each of the following statements.

**RANK** from most important to least important, using the number 1 for the least important and the number 10 for the most important











1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7                      8

Least or not important

Moderately important



**To improve retention of teachers in general**

1. Encourage further studies in specialized areas	-	
2. Pay more competitive salaries	-	
3. Establish alternate reward / recognition schemes	-	
4. Provide flexible options to move from Country to City postings	-	
5. Provide incentives to teach in subjects with teacher shortages	-	
6. Reduce the work load	-	
7. Give Principals a choice in staffing their school	-	
8. Enhance the collegial ethos and culture at the school level	-	
9. Teachers should teach and have minimal administrative duties	-	
10. Provide more trained classroom assistants	-	

1

2

3






4

**Least or not  
important**

**Moderately important**

**To improve the retention of Early Career Teachers**

**RANK** from most important to least important, using the number 1 for the least important and the number 5 for the most important

11. Develop relationships and support for students during teacher training	-	
12. Confirm employment for high achieving graduates early	-	
13. Have more realistic job previews for trainee teachers	-	
14. Provide more support and professional development to early career teachers	-	
15. Provide mentors to early career teachers	-	

**Which of the following is your preferred work location?**

<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer to work in the metropolitan area
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer to work in the rural areas
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer to work in a remote location

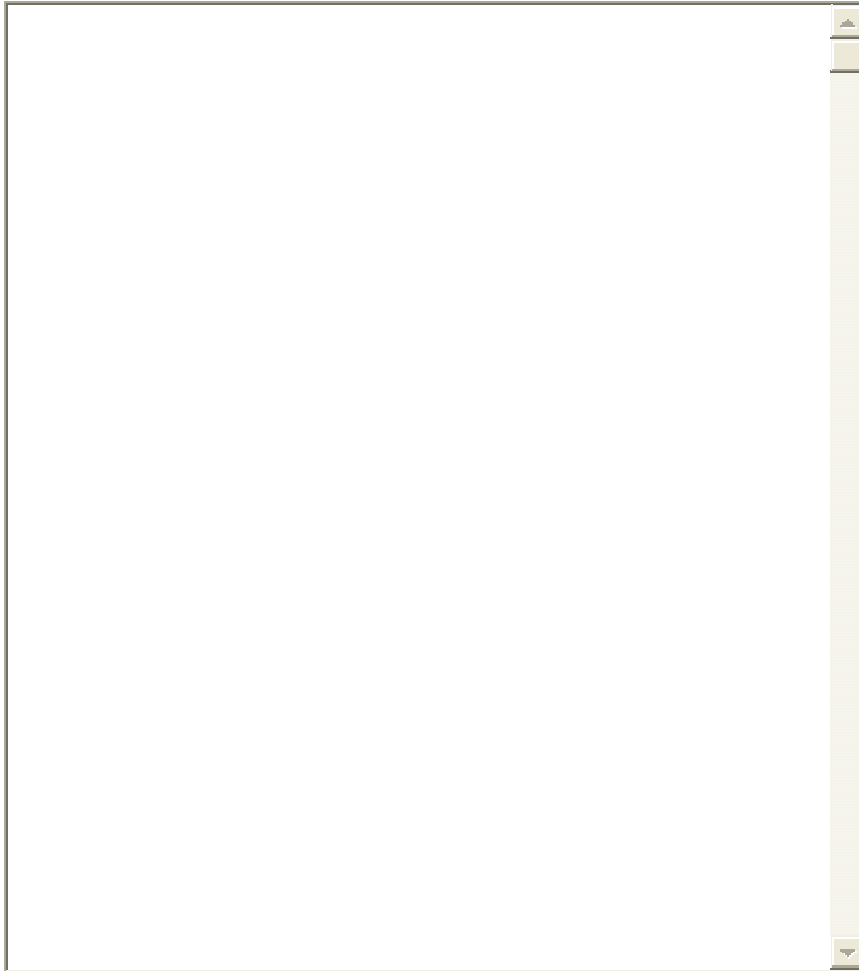
**If your preferred location is not in a remote area, would you be**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Happy to work in a remote area for a 2-year period?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Happy to work in a remote area if only for 1 year?
<input type="checkbox"/>	Happy to work in a remote area for short periods of one term or more?

**I plan to remain in my current school sector for**

<input type="checkbox"/>	I want to change careers
<input type="checkbox"/>	2 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	5 years
<input type="checkbox"/>	10 years or longer
<input type="checkbox"/>	Until I retire

**If you have any comments or suggestions, please provide below.**



---

## SECTION II

**Some brief information on your demographic background will help categorize results. Please indicate the response that best fits you.**

**Sector taught :**

- ☐ Government
- ☐ Catholic
- ☐ Independent

**Years Worked:**

- ☐ Less than 5
- ☐ 5 to 10
- ☐ 11 to 15

- ☐ 16 to 20
- ☐ 21 or above

**School Type:**

- ☐ Primary
- ☐ Secondary
- ☐ Other

**Subject Areas:**

- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Science
- ☐ LOTE
- ☐ Others
- ☐ Not Applicable

**School Location:**

- ☐ Metropolitan
- ☐ Regional
- ☐ Remote

**Gender:**

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

**Age Range:**

- ☐ 20 - 30
- ☐ 31 - 40
- ☐ 41 - 50
- ☐ 51 or above

**If you would like to be sent a copy of the summarised findings from this research, please provide your preferred mail or e-mail address.**

End of Questionnaire

**Thank you very much for participating**

Submit Responses





As two participants are required from each organisation, I would appreciate contact with another appropriate expert in your organisation with previous or current WA experience in HR strategies and policies that affect teachers or direct management / leadership in the primary or secondary schools.

Under the National Health and Medical Research (NHMRC) guidelines, participants can decide to withdraw their consent at any time. All information given during the survey is confidential and no names or other information that might identify you will be disclosed unless written permission is obtained. Feedback on the study will be provided by mail to participants who indicate they would like to have a copy of the summarised research findings.

The guideline requires written consent from participants and I would appreciate you signing the following consent form below and returning it to me in order for the study to go ahead. If you have any questions about this project please feel free to contact either myself, Mrs. Jennifer Ashiedu, on 9360 2557 or my supervisor, Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd, on 9360 6028. My supervisor and I are happy to discuss any concerns you may have on how this study is being conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee on 9360 6677.

I (the participant) have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop at any time. I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law. I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided my name or other information which might identify me is not used.

Participant/Authorized Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 2/11/05

Chief Investigator: Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd

Signed: B. D. Scott-Ladd

Date: 3-11-05

Investigator: Associate Professor Lanny Entrekin:

Signed: L. V. Entrekin

Date: 3-11-05

Investigator: Jennifer Ashiedu

Signed: J. Ashiedu

Date: 3-11-05



- 1 AUG 2006



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## INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

24-07-06

Two empty rectangular boxes for stamping or marking.

### Request for Participation in Qualitative Research Interview

I am a PhD student at Murdoch University investigating the implementation of strategic human resource management (SHRM) in schools in Western Australia under the Supervision of Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd and Associate Professor Leland Entrekina.

The purpose of this study is to examine existing human resource management policies and practices operating within schools. Please see more information in the attached abridged version of the proposal. The anticipated outcome is to develop an integrated school based model of SHRM that incorporates human resource management strategies that could help in the attraction and retention of teachers.

The research is being carried out over two phases. The first phase was a Delphi study involving external stakeholder experts in the field of education and school based human resource management which was undertaken between November 2005 and March 2006 (summary report is attached). The experts were drawn from the three school sectors – Public (represented by WA Department of Education and Training), the Independent schools (represented by the Association of Independent Schools of WA) and the Catholic Schools (represented by Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia) and Academia (represented by the School of Education, Murdoch University). The second phase of the research which has commenced involves qualitative interviews amongst human resource staff from selected WA secondary and primary schools.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a key stakeholder in the field of education. You can consent to participate in the Study and as participants, you will be asked to express your opinion on the following two topics as they relate to schools.

1. The effectiveness of the current human resource management policies in helping schools achieve its outcomes and
2. Strategies that you believe could improve the attraction and retention of teachers in schools.

[www.choose.murdoch.edu.au](http://www.choose.murdoch.edu.au)

The study which is planned to take place in August, 2006 will involve a face-to-face interview. It is anticipated that the duration of the interview will be about 30 minutes and it will involve no more than one visit per school.

If you are willing to participate in this study, could you please complete the details below. Please feel free to contact either myself, Mrs. Jennifer Ashiedu, on 9360 2557 or my supervisor, Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd, on 9360 6028 if you have any questions about this project. My supervisor and I are happy to discuss with you any concerns you may have on how this study will be conducted, or alternatively you can contact Murdoch University's Human Research Ethics Committee on 9360 6677.

I (the participant) have read the information above. Any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to take part in this activity, however, I know that I may change my mind and stop at any time. I understand that all information provided is treated as confidential and will not be released by the investigator unless required to do so by law. I agree for this interview to be taped. I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided my name or other information which might identify me is not used.

Participant/Authorised Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 3/08/06

Chief Investigator: Dr. Brenda Scott-Ladd

Signed: B. Scott-Ladd Date: 27-07-06

Investigator: Associate Professor Leland Entrekina

Signed: L. V. Entrekina Date: 27-07-06

Investigator: Jennifer Ashiedu

Signed: J. Ashiedu Date: 24/07/06

## Appendix 4.1: Case Study Participants and Site Demographics

Case Study Participants and Sites Demographics												
S/Nos	Sector	Location	Participant	Gender		Age of Participants				Participants Code	Case Study Code	Case Study Site
				F	M	20-30	31-40	41-50	>50			
1	Independent	Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer		y		y			CS1	Case CS1	Large Independent Combined Primary / Secondary School
2		Metropolitan	HR	y					y	CS2a	Case CS2	Large Independent Combined Primary / Secondary School
3		Metropolitan	Principal		y				y	CS2b		
4		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer		y			y		CS3	Case CS3	Large Independent Combined Primary / Secondary School
5		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	y				y		CS4	Case CS4	Large Independent Combined Primary / Secondary School
6		Metropolitan	HR	y				y		CS5	Case CS5	Small Independent Primary School
7		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer		y			y		CS6	Case CS6	Large Independent Combined Primary / Secondary School
8	Catholic	Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	y			y			CS7	Case CS7	Large Catholic Combined Primary / Secondary School
9		Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer	y					y	CS8	Case CS8	Large Catholic Combined Primary / Secondary School
10		Metropolitan	Principal		y				y	CS9	Case CS9	Medium Catholic Primary School
11	Public	Metropolitan	HR Mgr/Officer		y			y		CS10a	Case CS10	Public Primary / Secondary Schools under the WA DET
12		Metropolitan	Director		y			y		CS10b		
13		Region	Director	y				y		CS10c		
Total Participants			13	6	7	1	2	6	4			
Percentage			100%	46%	54%	8%	15%	46%	31%			

## Appendix 4.2: Retired Teachers Demographics

Retired Teachers Demographics																
	Sector	Years Worked	Subject					School Type			School Location			Gender		Age
PC	Govt	>21	Math	Sc	LOT	Other	N/A	Pry	Sec	Other	Metro	Reg	Rem	M	F	>50
RT01	1	1				1			1		1	1		1		1
RT02	1	1					1	1			1	1	1		1	1
RT03	1	1	1	1		1		1			1			1		1
RT04	1	1				1		1	1	1		1	1	1		1
RT05	1	1			1				1		1	1		1		1
Total	5	5	1	1	1	3	1	3	3	3	4	4	2	4	1	1
%	100	100	20	20	20	60	20	60	60	60	80	80	40	80	20	100
PC = Participants' Code			Govt = Government				Math = Mathematics				Sc = Science			LOT = LOTE		
Pry = Primary			Sec = Secondary				Metro = Metropolitan				Reg = Region			Rem = Remote		

## Appendix 4.3: Teachers Survey Participants' Demographics

Teacher Survey Demographics																										
	Sector			Years Worked					School Type			Subject					School Location				Gender		Age			
	Govt	Cath	Ind	< 5	5-10	11-15	16-20	>21	Pry	Sec	Other	Math	Sc	LOT	Other	N/A	Metro	Reg	Rem	M	F	20-30	31-40	41-50	>50	
TS01	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	
TS02	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	
TS03	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	
TS04	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	
TS05	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS06	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	
TS07	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	
TS08	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS09	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS10	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	
TS11	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS12	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	
TS13	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS14	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	
TS15	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	
TS16	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	
TS17	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	
TS18	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	
TS19	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS20	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS21	y	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS22	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	
TS23	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS24	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS25	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS26	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	
TS27	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	y	n	n	n	
TS28	y	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	
TS29	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	n	
TS30	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	y	n	n	
TS31	y	n	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	y	n	n	n	y	n	
Total	31	2	0	9	7	4	1	10	18	12	1	1	1	1	13	15	23	7	1	9	22	8	7	10	6	
%	100%	6%	0%	29%	23%	13%	3%	32%	58%	39%	3%	3%	3%	3%	42%	48%	74%	23%	3%	29%	71%	26%	23%	32%	19%	
Legend:																										
%	% of Participants																									
Govt	Government																									
Cath	Catholic																									
Ind	Independent																									
% Y	Percentage of participants with YES (y)																									